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NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS NME

Albums Implosion

Roxy, TRB, Only Ones Bad Co, Culture, and more

LENE LOVICH

lets her hair down, up, and sideways

THE SKIDS

Dunfermline's vital cup tie p27

The Last Interview?

VAN MORRISON

Aggravation & Despair On Tour p30-32

By TONY STEWART

VAN MORRISON/Pic PENNIE SMITH

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FIVE YEARS AGO

Last Week	This Week	Weekending March 12, 1974.
1	1	JEALOUS MIND ..... Alvin Stardust (Magnet)
3	2	THE AIR THAT I BREATHE .....Hollies (Polydor)
9	3	BILLY DON'T BE A HERO ..... Paper Lace (Bus Stop)
5	4	YOU'RE SIXTEEN ..... Ringo Starr (Apple)
8	5	THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL ..... Charlie Rich (CBS)
2	6	DEVIL GATE DRIVE..... Suzi Quatro (Rak)
10	7	JET .....Paul McCartney & Wings (Apple)
6	8	REMEMBER (SHA-LA-LA) .....Bay City Rollers (Bell)
4	9	WOMBLING SONG .....The Wombles (CBS)
15	10	CANDLE IN THE WIND..... Elton John (DJM)

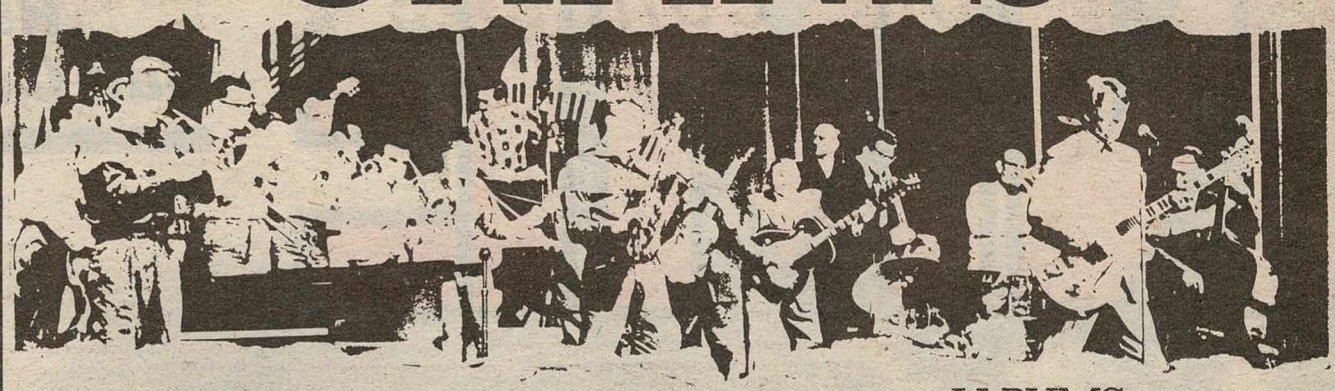
TEN YEARS AGO

Last Week	This Week	Week ending March 12, 1969
1	1	WHERE DO YOU GO TO.... Peter Sarstedt (United Artists)
5	2	SURROUND YOURSELF WITH SORROW Cilla Black (Parlophone)
9	3	I HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE Marvin Gaye (Tamla Motown)
2	4	HALF AS NICE.....Amen Corner (Immediate)
3	5	I'M GONNA MAKE YOU LOVE ME Diana Ross & The Supremes & The Temptations (Tamla Motown)
7	6	WICHITA LINEMAN..... Glen Campbell (Ember)
11	7	GENTLE ON MY MIND.....Dean Martin (Reprise)
4	8	THE WAY IT USED TO BE Engelbert Humperdinck (Decca)
13	9	MONSIEUR DUPONT..... Sandie Shaw (Pye)
6	10	PLEASE DON'T GO .....Donald Peers (Columbia)

15 YEARS AGO

Last Week	This Week	Week ending March 13, 1964
1	1	ANYONE WHO HAD A HEART.....Cilla Black (Parlophone)
2	2	BITS AND PIECES..... Dave Clark Five (Columbia)
7	3	LITTLE CHILDREN ..... Billy J. Kramer (Columbia)
3	4	DIANE..... Bachelors (Decca)
5	5	NOT FADE AWAY.....Rolling Stones (Decca)
4	6	I THINK OF YOU.....Merseybeats (Fontana)
16	7	JUST ONE LOOK..... Hollies (Parlophone)
10	8	BOYS CRY.....Eden Kane (Fontana-Lindon)
5	9	NEEDLES AND PINS ..... Searchers (Pye)
12	10	OVER YOU..... Freddie and the Dreamers (Columbia)

CHARTS



SINGLES

This Week	Last Week	Week ending March 10, 1979	Weeks in chart	Highest position
1	(2)	**TRAGEDY**..... Bee Gees (RSO)	3	1
2	(1)	**HEART OF GLASS**.. Blondie (Chrysalis)	7	1
3	(4)	**OLIVER'S ARMY** Elvis Costello (Radar)	4	3
4	(5)	**I WILL SURVIVE** Gloria Gaynor (Polydor)	5	4
5	(14)	**LUCKY NUMBER** .... Lene Lovich (Stiff)	2	5
6	(8)	**CONTACT**.. Edwin Starr (20th Century)	5	4
7	(3)	**CHIQUITITA**..... Abba (Epic)	5	1
8	(19)	**GET IT**.....Darts (Magnet)	3	18
9	(11)	**CAN YOU FEEL THE FORCE** Real Thing (Pye)	2	9
10	(6)	**WOMAN IN LOVE** Three Degrees (Ariola)	7	3
11	(9)	**GET DOWN** Gene Chandler (20th Century)	5	9
12	(7)	**I WAS MADE FOR DANCIN'** Leif Garrett (Atlantic)	6	6
13	(15)	**SOUND OF THE SUBURBS** Members (Virgin)	4	13
14	(—)	**SOMETHING ELSE** Sex Pistols (Virgin)	1	14
15	(10)	**AIN'T LOVE A BITCH** Rod Stewart (Riva)	5	10
16	(24)	**I WANT YOUR LOVE**..... Chic (Atlantic)	2	16
17	(18)	**INTO THE VALLEY**..... Skids (Virgin)	2	17
18	(21)	**BAT OUT OF HELL**.....Meat Loaf (Epic)	3	18
19	(26)	**KEEP ON DANCIN'** Gary's Gang (CBS)	2	19
20	(—)	**PAINTER MAN** Boney M (Atlantic/Hansa)	1	20
21	(—)	**HOLD THE LINE**.....Toto (CBS)	2	21
22	(—)	**MONEY IN MY POCKET** Dennis Brown (Atlantic)	1	22
23	(16)	**TAKE ON THE WORLD** Judas Priest (CBS)	4	15
24	(13)	**MILK AND ALCOHOL** Dr Feelgood (United Artists)	6	8
25	(—)	**JUST WHAT I NEEDED**... Cars (Elektra)	1	25
26	(—)	**DON'T STOP ME NOW**.....Queen (EMI)	2	25
27	(—)	**WHAT A FOOL BELIEVES** Doobie Brothers (Warner Bros)	2	27
28	(17)	**KING ROCKER** Generation X (Chrysalis)	6	10
29	(22)	**HEAVEN KNOWS** Donna Summer (Casablanca)	2	22
30	(—)	**ENGLISH CIVIL WAR**.....Clash (CBS)	1	30

BUBBLING UNDER . . .
TRASH — Roxy Music (Polydor); EVERYTHING IS GREAT — Inner Circle (Island); WAITING FOR AN ALIBI — Thin Lizzy (Vertigo); PROTECTION — Graham Parker & The Rumour (Phonogram).

ALBUMS

This Week	Last Week	Week ending March 10, 1979	Weeks in chart	Highest position
1	(1)	**PARALLEL LINES**... Blondie (Chrysalis)	21	1
2	(3)	**SPIRITS HAVING FLOWN** Bee Gees (RSO)	5	2
3	(2)	**ARMED FORCES** Elvis Costello (Radar)	8	2
4	(4)	**ACTION REPLAY**.....Various (K-Tel)	8	2
5	(6)	**MARTY ROBBINS COLLECTION** Marty Robbins (Lotus)	4	5
5	(7)	**THANK YOU VERY MUCH** Cliff Richard & The Shadows (EMI)	3	5
7	(5)	**BLONDES HAVE MORE FUN** Rod Stewart (Riva)	14	2
8	(15)	**NEW BOOTS & PANTIES** Ian Dury & The Blockheads (Stiff)	42	5
9	(9)	**STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT** UFO (Chrysalis)	4	8
10	(—)	**MANILOW MAGIC** Barry Manilow (Arista)	1	10
11	(17)	**BAT OUT OF HELL**.....Meat Loaf (Epic)	26	6
12	(12)	**THE BEST OF EARTH WIND AND FIRE VOL 1**..... (CBS)	9	5
13	(17)	**WINGS GREATEST** Wings (Parlophone)	11	3
14	(13)	**EQUINOXE** Jean Michel Jarre (Polydor)	11	6
15	(30)	**52nd STREET**..... Billy Joel (CBS)	7	15
16	(19)	**TRES CHIC**..... Chic (Atlantic)	5	13
17	(10)	**NEIL DIAMOND'S 20 GOLDEN GREATS** Neil Diamond (MCA)	16	1
17	(—)	**DIRE STRAITS**..... Dire Straits (Vertigo)	1	17
19	(26)	**THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING DICKIES**..... Dickies (A & M)	3	19
20	(16)	**OUT OF THE BLUE** Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	61	3
21	(—)	**THE GREAT ROCK 'N' ROLL SWINDLE**.....Sex Pistols (Virgin)	1	21
22	(20)	**GREASE**..... Original Soundtrack (RSO)	34	1
23	(—)	**YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS** Neil Diamond (CBS)	8	14
24	(8)	**DON'T WALK, BOOGIE** Various (EMI)	10	1
25	(—)	**TURN TO THE MUSIC** Players Association (Vanguard)	1	25
26	(21)	**EVEN NOW**.....Barry Manilow (Arista)	8	6
27	(—)	**CLASSIC ROCK VOL 2**.....LSO (K-Tel)	1	27
28	(24)	**WAR OF THE WORLDS** Jeff Wayne (CBS)	35	2
29	(—)	**INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL** Stiff Little Fingers (Rough Trade)	1	29
30	(25)	**20 GREATEST HITS** Three Degrees (Epic)	2	25

BUBBLING UNDER . . .
X-RATED — The Stranglers (U.A.); AT THE BUDOKAN — Cheap Trick (Epic); LOOK SHARP — Joe Jackson (A&M); GEORGE HARRISON — George Harrison (EMI).

U.S. SINGLES

This Week	Last Week	Week ending March 10, 1979
1	(2)	**I WILL SURVIVE** ..... Gloria Gaynor
2	(1)	**DO YA THINK I'M SEXY**..... Rod Stewart
3	(8)	**TRAGEDY** ..... Bee Gees
4	(5)	**HEAVEN KNOWS**..... Donna Summer
5	(3)	**FIRE**..... Pointer Sisters
6	(7)	**SHAKE YOUR GROOVE THING** Peaches and Herb
7	(4)	**A LITTLE MORE LOVE**..... Olivia Newton-John
8	(10)	**WHAT A FOOL BELIEVES** ..... Doobie Brothers
9	(6)	**Y.M.C.A**..... Village People
10	(11)	**DON'T CRY OUT LOUD**..... Melisa Manchester
11	(16)	**SULTANS OF SWING** ..... Dire Straits
12	(14)	**WHAT YOU WON'T DO FOR LOVE** Bobby Caldwell
13	(13)	**THE GAMBLER**..... Kenny Rogers
14	(15)	**NO TELL LOVER**..... Chicago
15	(9)	**LE FREAK**..... Chic
16	(20)	**EVERY TIME I THINK OF YOU** ..... The Babys
17	(18)	**DANCIN' SHOES** ..... Nigel Olsson
18	(22)	**LADY** ..... Little River Band
19	(21)	**CRAZY LOVE** ..... Poco
20	(25)	**BIG SHOT**..... Billy Joel
21	(24)	**I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S RIGHT** Evelyn "Champagne" King
22	(12)	**TOO MUCH HEAVEN** ..... Bee Gees
23	(27)	**I JUST FALL IN LOVE AGAIN** .....Anne Murray
24	(—)	**KNOCK ON WOOD**..... Ami Stewart
25	(—)	**MUSIC BOX DANCER** ..... Frank Mills
26	(28)	**FOREVER IN BLUE JEANS** .....Neil Diamond
27	(—)	**STUMBLIN' IN**.....Suzi Quatro/Chris Norman
28	(30)	**SONG ON THE RADIO** ..... Al Stewart
29	(17)	**SHAKE IT** ..... Ian Matthews
30	(23)	**LOTTA LOVE** ..... Nicolette Larson

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

U.S. ALBUMS

This Week	Last Week	Week ending March 10, 1979
1	(1)	**SPIRITS HAVING FLOWN**..... Bee Gees
2	(2)	**BLONDES HAVE MORE FUN**..... Rod Stewart
3	(4)	**MINUTE BY MINUTE** ..... Doobie Brothers
4	(5)	**DIRE STRAITS** ..... Dire Straits
5	(3)	**BRIEFCASE FULL OF BLUES** ..... Blues Brothers
6	(6)	**52nd STREET**..... Billy Joel
7	(7)	**TOTALLY HOT**..... Olivia Newton-John
8	(8)	**CRUISIN'**..... Village People
9	(13)	**LOVE TRACKS**..... Gloria Gaynor
10	(12)	**ARMED FORCES** Elvis Costello & The Attractions
11	(11)	**C'EST CHIC** ..... Chic
12	(9)	**TOTO**..... Toto
13	(17)	**2 HOT!**..... Peaches & Herb
14	(15)	**LIVE AND MORE** ..... Donna Summer
15	(16)	**LIFE FOR THE TAKING**..... Eddie Money
16	(10)	**THE BEST OF EARTH, WIND & FIRE VOL. 1**
17	(18)	**ENERGY**..... Pointer Sisters
18	(24)	**BUSTIN' OUT OF L SEVEN**..... Rick James
19	(14)	**NICOLETTE**..... Nicolette Larson
20	(28)	**GOLD** ..... Jefferson Starship
21	(19)	**BARBRA STREISAND'S GREATEST HITS VOL. 2**
22	(21)	**GREATEST HITS**..... Barry Manilow
23	(20)	**DOUBLE VISION** ..... Foreigner
24	(25)	**THE GAMBLER**..... Kenny Rogers
25	(—)	**CHEAP TRICK AT THE BUDOKAN**.. Cheap Trick
26	(22)	**BACKLESS**..... Eric Clapton
27	(27)	**YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS** Neil Diamond
28	(29)	**CHERYL LYNN**..... Cheryl Lynn
29	(—)	**CARS**..... Cars
30	(30)	**JOHN DENVER**..... John Denver

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

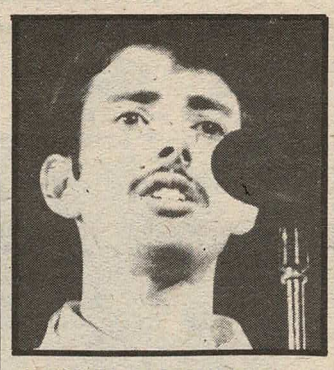
Miller: acting role, concerts and new discs

FRANKIE MILLER's career — already considerably boosted by his recent chart successes, 'Darlin' and 'When I'm Away From You' — continues to gain momentum with the announcement of a new album and single, a major tour starting later this month, and his straight acting debut in an upcoming TV play. The new LP, which contains both his recent hit singles, is titled 'Falling In Love' and is set for March 16 release by Chrysalis. It's preceded this weekend by his latest single called 'Good To See You'.

Miller is currently in Scotland filming a leading role in a drama production tentatively titled 'Weekend In Lost Paradise', for screening later in the year in BBC-1's 'Play For Today' series. He plays the part of Jake McQuillan, a tough Greenock shipyard worker. The play was written by Peter McDougall, who was responsible for 'Just Another Saturday Night' and 'Eelephants Graveyard', which gave Billy Connolly his acting debut.

Together with his recently revamped Full House Band, Miller opens another tour at Colchester Essex University on March 22. Other confirmed dates are St. Austell Cornish Riviera (24), Cleethorpes Winter Gardens (26), Cardiff Top Rank (28), Birmingham Barbarella's (29), Hastings Pier Pavilion (30), Northampton County Ground (31), Dundee Caird Hall (April 2), Aberdeen Music Hall (3) and Glasgow Apollo (7).

A number of other dates are still being finalised — including a big London show — and details of these are expected next week. Miller and the band also record a Radio 1 'In Concert' show on March 21, for subsequent broadcast.



Richman plays new-approach acoustic tour

JONATHAN RICHMAN will climax his British tour later this month — plans for which were revealed last week — with a major London concert at the Royalty Theatre in Kingsway on Sunday, March 25. It will be Richman's first UK visit since splitting from The Modern Lovers, and British audiences will have the opportunity of seing him for the first time as a solo acoustic performer — a role he's recently been fulfilling very successfully in the States, where he's been working consistently on the circuit for several months.

Other confirmed dates are Bradford University (March 14), Stoke North Staffs Polytechnic (15), Liverpool Eric's (16), Leeds Polytechnic (17), Leicester Phoenix Theatre (18), Brighton Sussex University (22) and Nottingham Club Malibu (24). One more venue has still to be finalised.

To tie in with his visit, Beserkley release Richman's latest album 'Back In Your Life' on March 16. Coming out the same day is a single taken from the LP, titled 'Lydia'.

TRB TOUR SET

TOM ROBINSON BAND announce plans for a 19-date spring tour of the UK — including two gigs in Ulster, two in the London suburbs, but none in Central London! The outing aids promotion of their second album 'TRB Two' which, as reported in our last issue, is released this weekend by EMI. The LP, produced by Todd Rundgren, includes the band's new single 'Bully For You' — but not the B-side 'Our People', which Robinson wrote for the recent ITV documentary about him.

Tour dates are Swansea Top Rank (March 20), Exeter Routes (21), Plymouth Polytechnic (22), Belfast Ulster Hall (24), Southport New Theatre (29), Nottingham Club Malibu (30), Bridlington Spa Royal Hall (31), Blackburn King George's Hall (April 1), Dunstable California (3), High Wycombe Town Hall (4), Southampton Guildhall (5), Guildford Civic Hall (6), London Lewisham Odeon (7), Wolverhampton Civic Hall (8), London Ilford Odeon (9) and Ipswich Gaumont (10).

At press-time, the band were still auditioning for a new permanent drummer to replace Dolphin Taylor, who left at the end of last year. It's not yet clear if they will have engaged a new member in time for the tour, or if they will have to use a session musician — although session drummer Preston Hayman, who plays on the album, won't be available as he is in Kate Bush's band for her April tour.

Following their British dates, TRB leave for North America, where they'll be touring the USA and Canada for seven weeks — opening in Vancouver on April 18. Box-offices at all 19 venues in their itinerary are now open, with an average ticket price of £2.

● Jean Jacques Burnel's solo tour, announced last week, will have a standard admission price at all venues of £2 (in advance) and £2.50 (on the door). The only exception is London Drury Lane Theatre Royal on April 30, where tickets are £3.25, £2.75, £2.25 and £2.

Burnel has now finalised the line-up of his backing band as ex-Drones drummer Peter Howells, ex-Vibrators guitarist John Ellis and girl keyboards player Penny Tobin.

Sea Level's spring visit

SEA LEVEL are being lined up for a series of major British concert appearances in mid-spring. Agent-promoter Phil Banfield, of the recently formed P.A.N. company, says they'll be here in late April and early May. He expects to be able to announce dates and venues shortly. Banfield is also setting up a string of May concerts for the Climax Blues Band, who have just completed a three-month recording stint in the Caribbean.

Skids extra

THE SKIDS have added another two dates to their current tour — at Plymouth Metro (this Sunday) and Huddersfield Polytechnic (March 27). And they have slotted in extra matinee performances at five venues already set — Sheffield Limit Club (March 15), Liverpool Eric's (17), Edinburgh Tiffany's (19), Manchester Russell Club (23) and Middlesbrough Rock Garden (24). Admission to these early-evening shows is just 75p, except at Edinburgh where it is £1.

Now Eric Burdon is Euro man!

ERIC BURDON filming at the Tyne Tees studios last week.

ERIC BURDON has revealed plans to form a Common Market band of leading European musicians, provisionally titled Euro Mann, with whom he will tour both the Continent and the UK. He has already lined up two keyboard players from Hamburg — one to provide hard rock piano, the other to back up with special effects.

He'll be looking for other members during his European tour this month with German superstar Udo Lindberg — one of that country's top artists, though relatively unknown in Britain.

Speaking of his Euro Mann project, Burdon said: "I aim to build a basic rhythm section first for a European tour, then develop the sound with horns and percussion for Britain and other markets." Burdon last week filmed a spot for Tyne Tees TV's upcoming new series 'Alright Now', before flying off to Germany.

SMIRKS DOING IT THEIR WAY

FOLLOWING their recently-reported upheaval with Beserkley, which left them without a record label, The Smirks are taking the initiative and releasing a three-track EP on their own Smirk Songs label. Produced by Mike Howlett, it's called 'American Patriots' and it features the title track, 'Angry With Myself' and 'Penetration'. The disc retails at £1 and is being distributed through Rough Trade, Virgin, Small Wonder, Lightning, Faulty Products and various other outlets.

But there's still no sign of their debut album coming out. Before the bust-up, it was to have been issued by Beserkley this weekend. However, the tapes are still locked in the studio, because payment hasn't been made for recording time! There have also been a number of changes in the band's current tour itinerary, which was to have promoted the LP, but which is going ahead regardless! Remaining dates in the schedule are now:

Liverpool Eric's (tonight, Thursday), Stafford North Staffs Poly (Friday), Norwich Boogie House (Saturday), Leicester University (March 12), Birmingham Barbarella's (13), York Revolution (14), Coventry Lanchester Poly (15), Scarborough Penthouse (16), Manchester Poly (17), Leeds Fforde Green Hotel (18), London Marquee (21), Sheffield Limit (22), Retford Porterhouse (23) and Nottingham Sandpiper (24).

BENEFIT BY TINA

TINA TURNER is to headline a big London charity show at the tail end of her previously reported British tour, opening this weekend (see Gig Guide) — it's at the Apollo Theatre in Shaftesbury Avenue on Sunday, March 25. She's already set for another London gig at the Hammersmith Odeon on March 16, although this is not a benefit.

Supporting her on all dates will be the singing-composing team of Waldorf Travers, whose single 'Big Time American Girl' has just been issued by UA. At the end of March, Tina goes into the Trident Studios to lay down a new album — the first time she has recorded in Britain.

NEWS

Advertising split

ADVERTISING, the four-piece unit who looked to have a bright future when they were signed by EMI a couple of years back, have now officially split up. And already co-leader Tot Taylor (guitar, keyboards, vocals) has formed a new band called Tot & The Girls In Room 419 — who can be seen in action at Weybridge College (this Saturday), Cambridge Selwyn College (March 15), London Southbank Polytechnic (19), Reading University (24), London Covent Garden Rock Garden (27) and London West Hampstead Moonlight Club (31).

Taylor, who will also be playing keyboards on the next Sham 69 album, goes to Sweden in early April. He'll be working in Abba's studios with leading Swedish artist Jannan Sale, who's recording several of Tot's songs.

The other Advertising front man Simon Boswell is at present working with Deptford band The Red Lights, and plays with them on keyboards at London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic (March 12), London Chelsea Art College (14) and London Deptford Albany Empire (22). Thereafter, their roles will be reversed — with Boswell switching back to guitar and vocals, and The Red Lights backing him — and dates for a tour in this format are currently being finalised.

The two remaining Advertising men are drummer Paul Boltitude, who has just finished recording four tracks with The Cruelties; and bassist Dennis Smith, who is involved in "a secret project which can't be revealed at the moment"!

Rich Kids break up

AND MATLOCK JOINS IGGY!

see page 11

PATTO DIES

MIKE PATTO, the renowned singer and keyboards player, died in hospital at the weekend after a long illness. He had been suffering from cancer of the throat. He was with Spooky Tooth for a time, and subsequently fronted his own highly-rated Patto band. More recently he played in Boxer and Keith Tippett's Centipede, but had not worked for some time because of his indisposition.

He was 36, and leaves a wife and three children. A London benefit concert, probably featuring Kokomo and many of his former associates, is being arranged for his family. Any of his colleagues wishing to make donations should send them to his wife Val McCarthy, c/o Barbara Craggs, 150 Goldhawk Road, London W.12.

FITZGERALD IS ALL SEWN UP!

PATRIK FITZGERALD goes on the road later this month, in support of his newly released Polydor debut single "All Sewn Up". Dates so far confirmed are Cardiff Granny's (March 15), London West Hampstead Moonlight Club (16), Birmingham Barbarella's (18), York University (20), Manchester The Factory (21), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (22), Liverpool Eric's (23), Aberdeen 72 Club (24), Oxford Oranges & Lemons (26), Belfast The Pound (28) and London Islington Hope & Anchor (30), with the likelihood of more to follow.

Return of Drifters

THE DRIFTERS have now been confirmed for a string of provincial engagements, in addition to their two-week season at London 's Talk Of The Town (April 12-24) reported last week. They play Porthcawl Stoneleigh Club (tonight, Thursday), Cardiff Troubadour (this Friday and Saturday), Manchester Golden Garter (March 26-31), Purfleet Circus Tavern (April 2-10), Westcliff Queen's Cabaret Club (11-14), Sheffield Fiesta (16), Windsor Blazers (19-20), Eastbourne King's Country Club (21), Birmingham Night Out (23-28), Jersey West Park Pavilion (30 and May 1) and Usk Stardust Club (2-5). Promoter is Henry Sellers.

● Freddy Cole, the late Nat Cole's brother, arrives this week for a tour — also set up by Sellers. Confirmed dates are Nottingham Heart of the Midlands (this Friday and Saturday), Camberley Lakeside Club (March 11-17, except 12), St. Agnes Talk of the West (21-24), Sheffield Fiesta (26-31), Burton Royall's Theatre Club (April 11-14), Cleethorpes Bunny Club (15), Porthcawl Stoneleigh Club (19-21) and Cardiff Troubadour (22). He's also playing one-nighters in the Midlands during the period April 2-8, but details are still being finalised.

Pretenders tour boosts debut hit

THE PRETENDERS spend most of this month on the road, promoting their Real Records single 'Stop Your Sobbin', with which they made their NME chart debut last week. At the beginning of April they go into the studios, initially to cut their follow-up single, then to work on their debut album. Meanwhile, their tour dates are:

London Kensington The Nashville (this Thursday and Friday), Colchester Essex University (Saturday), York Pop Club (March 12), Blackpool Norbreck Castle (15), Wolverhampton Lafayette (16), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (17), Jacksdale Grey Topper (18), Birmingham Barbarella's (20), Brighton Top Rank (21), Bristol Polytechnic (22), Cheltenham Gloucester Technical College (23), Liverpool Eric's (24), Exeter Routes (26), Plymouth Fiesta (27), Newport Stowaway Club (28), Barnstaple Chequers (29), Harlow Technical College (30) and Leicester Polytechnic (31).

RECORD NEWS

Spex single

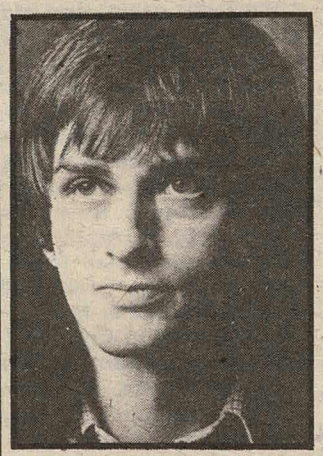
THE NEW X-Ray Spex single, already announced as 'Highly Inflammable', has now officially been set for release on March 16 on the EMI International label. The B-side is "Warrior in Woolworths", and both tracks are Poly Styrene compositions. It's likely that the band will be playing a few selected British dates a little later in the spring.

Sid tribute

MILTANT BARRY has his single "Pistol Boy", his own tribute to the late Sid Vicious, released by Maniac Records this weekend. It was produced by Keith Hudson and mixed by Tapper Zukie; the rhythm tracks were laid down in Jamaica, with the voice-over added in London. In addition to the standard seven-inch issue, there's also a limited edition of 5,000 disco versions.

● Newly announced singles from the EMI Group, out next week, include "Ain't No Shadow" by **Terry Reid** and "I Just Fall In Love Again" by **Anna Murray** (both on Capitol), "Holy Ghost" by **The Bar Kays** (Stax), "The Time Is Right For Love" by **Whitesnake** (EMI International) and "Bluebeat And Ska" by **Matumbi** (Harvest). And the title of the new **Peter Tosh** single has now been switched to "I'm The Toughest".

● Composer-arranger **Louis Clark** releases his debut album on March 23 on the Jet label, titled "(per-spek-tiv)n". Clark — who has worked on albums for Renaissance and Kiki Dee, and is co-arranger for ELO — produced the LP and plays keyboards, guitar, bass, flute and recorder — with the help of such musicians as Roy Wood, Francis Monkman and Peter Van Hooke. There are plans for a special one-off concert to be staged by the Louis Clark Orchestra, possibly filmed for TV.



● **Mike Oldfield** precedes his six major London concerts next month by releasing a new single on March 30 — titled "Guilty", it's on the Virgin label. And what's unusual from Oldfield's standpoint is that it's a disco single, recorded in New York last December with local session musicians, and available in both 12-inch and seven-inch forms.

● **The Fabulous Poodles,** currently touring America with some considerable success, have been remixing a track called "Work Shy" during their stay in the States. It will be issued here shortly by Polydor.

● **Rachel Sweet** has her second single for Stiff Records coming out on March 16. Titled "I Go To Pieces", it's shipped in a full colour bag for the first 30,000 copies.

● Just out on Cherry Red Records is a compilation album of singles released by various small independent labels. Under the title of 'Business Unusual (The Other Record Collection)', it features such bands as **U.K. Subs, Throbbing Gristle, The Leyton Buzzards, Cabaret Voltaire, The Outsiders, The Outcasts** and **The Vice Creems.**

● **Bonnie Pointer** arrives in Britain tomorrow (Friday) for her first visit since she left The Pointer Sisters. She's coming for a week to promote her current 12-inch Motown single 'Heaven Must Have Sent You' and her newly released album 'Bonnie Pointer'.

● A new single by **Jerry Lee Lewis & Friends,** the second to be extracted from their 'Duets' album, is released by Charly Records this weekend. It couples 'Hello Josephine' and 'What'd I Say'.

● **The Members,** still figuring strongly in the charts with their single 'Sound Of The Suburbs', have already announced plans for their follow-up. Coupling 'Offshore Banking Business' and 'Solitary Confinement', it's released by Virgin on March 23. Their debut album 'At The Chelsea Nightclub' comes out on April 6.

● **The Royal Rasses,** the Jamaican reggae band formed by Prince Lincoln, have their first album 'Humanity' issued by United Artists on March 16. It's preceded this weekend by a single taken from it, titled 'Old Time Friends' — with the first 10,000 copies pressed as a 12-inch in clear vinyl.

● **John Otway's** new Polydor single 'Frightened And Scared' is set for March 23 release. Produced by Neil Innes and Steve James, it features backing musicians Morgan Fisher (keyboards), Ollie Halsall (guitar), Paul Matinez (bass) and Charlie Morgan (drums).

● **Instant Funk's** new album, issued on the Salsoul label this weekend and bearing their name as its title, icnludes the re-mixed 12-inch version of their hit single 'Got My Mind Made Up'. Similarly, **David Simmons'** new March LP 'Hear Me Out', on the Fantasy label, includes the disco re-mix of his single 'Will They Miss Me'.

● Singer and multi-instrumentalist **Leonard Vice** has been signed by Raw Records, who issue his single 'I've Got Spots' this weekend. The label has also signed Peterborough band **The Now,** whose debut single 'Into The 80's' comes out on March 23.

● **Michael Zager's** new album 'Life's A Party', featuring **Cissy Houston** on vocals, is set for April release on the Salsoul label (distributed by EMI).

● **Stella Parton** (sister of you-know-who) and **Leo Sayer** are currently recording together in Nashville, with a view to releasing a duo album.

● Coinciding with this week's release of the new **Buzzcocks** single 'Everybody's Happy Nowadays', United Artists have repackaged the band's first six singles in their original colour sleeves for reissue tomorrow (Friday). They are 'Orgasm Addict', 'What Do I Get', 'I Don't Mind', 'Love You More', 'Ever Fallen In Love' and 'Promises'.

● **Lew Lewis** has returned to Stiff Records, the label that released his first single "Boogie On The Street". Together with his new band Reformer, he's recorded a version of his song "Lucky Seven", which Stiff release on March 16.

Two songs, one groove!

BRITAIN'S first-ever double-groove single is issued by MCA on March 16. This is a technique whereby two songs are recorded on one track — put the stylus on the record and it plays the first song, then go back to the beginning and it plays the second! The act chosen for this innovation is European band M, whose last single was 'Moderate Man'. Their new release has 'Pop Muzik' and 'M Factor' on the A-side double groove, and a full length version of 'Pop Muzik' on the other side. Initially it's in a limited edition of 10,000 12-inch copies, retailing at £1.49.

Tchaikovsky: seven extra

BRAM TCHAIKOVSKY have added seven more dates to their own headlining tour reported last week, which follows their current series of dates with Uriah Heep. The additions are at London Kensington Nashville (March 25), Sheffield University (29), Dumfries Stagecoach (April 1), Edinburgh Tiffany's (2), Scunthorpe Tiffany's (3), Crewe Alsager College (5) and Nottingham Club Malibu (7).

● LEW LEWIS Reformer, just winding up a tour with Wilko Johnson, have subsequent London gigs in their own right at Canning Town Bridge House (March 13), Camden Dingwalls (18), Islington Hope & Anchor (21) and Covent Garden Rock Garden (24) — plus Brentwood Hermit Club (March 12) and Uxbridge Brunel University (25). They also support George Thorogood & The Destroyers at London Camden Electric Ballroom on March 16 and 17, and Texas bluesman Albert Collins has just been added to the bill on both those dates.

News briefs

BILL NELSON'S LINE-UP

BILL NELSON has at last announced the line-up of his new band Red Noise, who began their debut UK tour last weekend. They are brother Ian Nelson (keyboards) and sax), Steve Peer (drums), Rick Ford (Bass) and Andy Clark (keyboards). After their British dates, the band go into the studios to record an EP, then tour Europe (April) and America (May).

HERE & NOW LOSE TWO

HERE & NOW have lost two of their members, Suze da Blooz (vocals) and Kif Kaf le Batter (drums), who both now have their own bands containing different musicians at every performance and playing completely improvised music. They're both taking part in the previously-reported free package tour by up-and-coming bands, which has just gone on the road. Meanwhile, Here & Now are planning another free tour in the spring.

ALBION BAND & MADDY

THE ALBION BAND are presenting a multi-media show involving music, dance, poetry, prose and mime at London Hammersmith Riverside Studios next week — from March 13 to 17. Also taking part are Maddy Prior, Mary Miller and two actors, Terrence Hardiman and James Bree. The BBC are filming it for inclusion in their 'Lively Arts' series.

VILLAGE BOWL CLOSURE

BOURNEMOUTH's renowned Village Disco and Concert Bowl, one of the top rock venues on the South Coast, is temporarily out of action for major renovations and refurbishing. The re-opening date won't be known for about a month.

MANFREDS OFF-SHOOT

TERRA NOVA is the name of a new band formed by Chris Slade (drums) and Colin Pattenden (bass), who were with Manfred Mann for seven years until they left in 1978. Rest of the line-up is Pete Cox (vocals), ex-Stomu Yamashta sideman Chris West (lead guitar) and Roy Shipstone (keyboards)., They are currently recording their first album, and plan to go on the road in May.

ALBANY FIRE BENEFIT

ALTERNATIVE TV top the bill in a special benefit concert on Sunday, March 18, at London Greenwich Theatre — a venue long closed to rock audiences. It's in aid of the Albany Theatre Fire Fund, and also taking part are Fashion and The Transmitters. Admission is £1.50, and tickets are available from tomorrow (Friday) at the venue and the Albany.

DOLL POSTPONE TOUR

THE DOLL have postponed plans to tour this month, and instead will spend the next few weeks recording their new Beggar's Banquet single, the follow-up to 'Desire Me'. They'll now be on the road in April and May, and dates are currently being set for this period, to be announced in a week or two.

BUDDY HOLLY FILM DUE

THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY, the long-awaited film biography of the near-legendary rock singer, will go on release on the Rank circuit in June. This follows its acquisition for British distribution by Jarvis Astaire, film producer and head of the Viewsport company. The movie stars Gary Busey in the title tole, for which he has received widespread acclaim from U.S. critics. The soundtrack album will be issued here through Warwick.

DEGREES SET APRIL VENUES

THE THREE DEGREES, whose new single 'The Runner' is released by Ariola on March 16, have announced a concert tour for next month. Confirmed dates are Manchester Apollo (April 14), Liverpool Empire (15), Blackpool Opera House (16), Dundee Caird Hall (18), Glasgow Apollo (19), Aberdeen Capitol (21), Edinburgh Usher Hall (22), Brighton Dome (23), Oxford New Theatre (28) and Bristol Hippodrome (29), with the likelihood of more to follow. There will be two performances each night, and tickets go on sale at all box-offices next Monday.

DUSTY'S UK GIGS

DATES AND VENUES have now been set for Dusty Springfield's British tour next month, her first country-wide outing for a decade. Initial plans for her concerts were revealed last week and, as forecast, they include a string of shows at London's Theatre Royal in Drury Lane.

Her dates are Manchester Apollo (April 8), Birmingham Odeon (9), Edinburgh Usher Hall (10), Brighton Dome (12), Bristol Hippodrome (13), Oxford New Theatre (16) and London Theatre Royal (19, 20 and 21). One venue on April 15 has still to be confirmed.

All box-offices open next Monday (12), with ticket prices in London ranging from £2 to £5.50, while elsewhere they run from £1.50 to £4.50. Dusty will be accompanied by a 12-piece orchestra and backing singers, and the support act is comedian-singer Bill Barclay.

Boyce concerts

MAX BOYCE headlines an extensive spring tour from March through into May, supported on all dates by Telephone Bill & The Smooth Operators, and playing venues he's missed on previous tours. He visits Plymouth Palace Theatre (March 22 and 23), Redruth Carn Brea Leisure Centre (24), Paignton Festival Theatre (25 and 26), Poole Arts Centre (27 and 28), Sandown I.o.W. Pavilion (30 and 31), Portsmouth Guildhall (April 1), Slough Thames Hall (2), Southend Cliffs Pavilion (3 and 4), Ebbw Vale Leisure Centre (7), Cardiff New Theatre (9-14), Swansea Grand Theatre (16-21), Queensferry Deeside Leisure Centre (26), Keswick Rugby Club (28), Douglas I.o.M. Villa Marina (May 1 and 2), Stratford-on-Avon Royal Shakespeare Theatre (6), Corby Festival Hall (7) and Malvern Winter Gardens (8 and 9). Ticket prices at all venues are £4, £3 and £2.

TOUR NEWS ROUND-UP

BILL HALEY & The Comets have added another three dates to their British tour starting this week (see Gig Guide). They are at Glasgow Apollo (March 19), Sheffield Fiesta (20) and Corby Festival Hall (21). Tickets are on sale now priced £4.50, £3.50 and £2.50 (Glasgow); £5 and £4.50 (Sheffield); and £4, £3 and £2 (Corby).

PLANXTY, the Irish folk band who re-formed shortly before Christmas, have now finalised the details of their comeback tour next month. They're aldready set for an Easter Sunday (April 15) show at London Hammersmith Odeon, and they've now added Newcastle City Hall (16), Edinburgh Usher Hall (17), Liverpool Philharmonic Hall (18), Manchester Apollo (19), Birmingham Odeon (20), Ipswich Gaumont (21) and Leeds Grand Theatre (22).

STRAIGHT 8 have lined up another string of dates for this month, visiting London Marquee (tonight, Thursday), London Strand Kings College (Friday), London Camden Music Machine (12), York Revolution (16), Manchester University (17), Birmingham Barbarella's (22), London Camden Dingwalls (23) and London Fulham Greyhound (24).

GOTHAM CITY SWING BAND set out on what they call their 'Next Week's Bandwagon' tour. Gigs so far set are New Brighton Grand Hotel (tonight, Thursday), Blackpool Norbreck Castle (Friday), Hull Groucho's Place (Sunday), Preston Peartree (March 12), Newport Stowaway (14), Lancaster No.12 Club (5), Birmingham University (16), Norwich Boogie House (17), London Fulham Greyhound (18), Basildon Double Six (23), Torquay 400 Club (29) and Gosport John Peel (30).

ERIC BELL BAND are gigging this month at London Camden Music Machine (tonight, Thursday), Harrow College of Higher Education (Friday), Matlock Pavilion (Saturday), Birmingham Polytechnic (Sunday), London Marquee (21), Blackburn Technical College (22), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (23), Nottingham Boat Club (24), Birmingham Barbarella's (30) and London Covent Garden Rock Garden (31).

JOHN DENVER has added another show at London Wembley Arena to his previously-reported British tour. It's on Tuesday, April 3, and it's been slotted in because his shows there on the two previous nights are now completely sold out. Tickets for the extra gig are on sale now at the venue and promoter Harvey Goldsmith's two box-offices, priced £7.50, £6.50 and £5.50.

PAUL ANKA has cancelled his London Palladium week which should have opened on Monday, April 2, and ticket-holders are asked to apply for cash refunds. Reason given is that he has to fulfil TV commitments in the States — although, whichever way you look at it, it's another let-down for the long-suffering British public.

THE ONLY ONES have added another five dates to their British tour schedule, reported two weeks ago — at Hull University (this Saturday), Newcastle Polytechnic (23), Bournemouth Grand Hall (28), Bristol Locarno replacing Leeds Fforde Green (April 1) and Loughborough Town Hall (4). Their Liverpool date on April 2 is now at the University instead of the Royal Court.

THE MOVIES undertake their first tour of 1979 this month, and the first confirmed gigs are Wakefeild Unity Hall (tomorrow, Friday), Reading University (16), Manchester University (17), Newcastle Polytechnic (18), Uxbridge Brunel University (23), Cromer West Runton Pavilion (24) and London Marquee (26). More are being finalised.

CULTURE have made two venue changes in their UK tour itenerary, reported two weeks ago. The reggae outfit now visit Manchester Apollo on March 20 instead of Wolverhampton Civic Hall, and on March 23 they are at Birmingham Bingley Hall instead of High Wycombe Town Hall.

THE RECORDS play three gigs in the middle of this month to support their debut Virgin single 'Rock and Roll Love Letter', issued next weekend — they are Rayleigh Crocs (March 14), Portsmouth Polytechnic (15) and London Camden Music Machine (16). Their first album 'Illness On The Big Screen' is due out in late April.

THE RUTS go back on the road during the second half of this month, with dates at Southend Scamps (15), London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle (16), Cambridge Corn Exchange (17), Leciester Polytechnic (19), Cromer West Runton Pavilion (20), Northolt Target Club (27) and Oxford College of Further Education (31).

U.K. SUBS have confirmed another five gigs for March — at Northampton Nene College (this Saturday), Plymouth Woods Centre (14), Exeter Routes (15), London Marquee (16) and London Kingsway College (23). Further dates are still being set.

THE WARM JETS have upcoming gigs at London Roehampton Digby Stuart College (this Saturday), Epson School of Art (March 16), live recording at London Camden Music Machine supported by The Tickets and Dog Watch (19), Cheltenham Plough (24), London Islington Hope & Anchor (28), London Fulham Greyhound (April 3), High Wycombe Nags Head (5), Norwich Boogie House (12) and Dartford College of Further Education (May 26).

MARTHA REEVES & The Vandellas have added another London date to their current UK tour — it's at The Venue in Victoria on Thursday, March 15. And The Bothy Band, who kick off their latest tour this weekend, have also slotted in a gig at The Venue — on Sunday, March 18.

CHARLIE GREEN of Bitch.

BITCH, the five-piece South London band fronted by blonde girl singer Charlie Green, have been signed by Beggar's Banquet and start work shortly on their first single. And between times they play Norwich Boogie House (March 15),Middlesbrough Rock Garden (17), Warrington Carlton Club (19), London West Hampstead Moonlight Club (20), London Camden Music Machine (26), London Camden Dingwalls (April 2), Bradford Royal Standard (15), London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle (16) and Retford Porterhouse (20).

GARY HOLTON'S GEMS will only be playing four gigs this month, because Holton is spending much of the next few weeks in the ATV studios, filming a dramatic role in an upcoming play called 'Red Saturday'. But the band take time out to visit Nottingham Boat Club (this Saturday),BirminghamBarbarella's (March 16), London Kensington Nashville (18) and London Camden Dingwalls (29).

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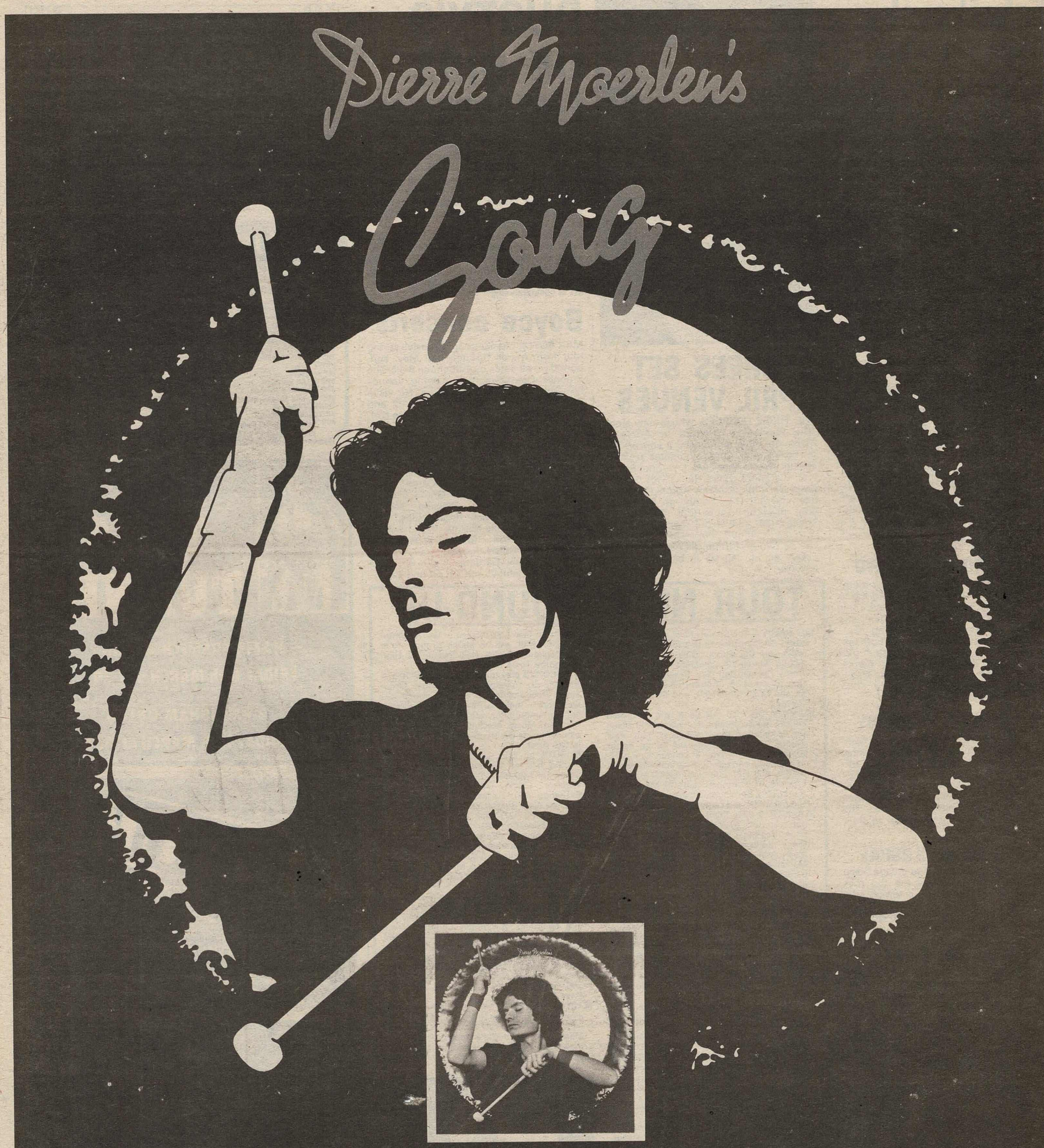
Pierre Moerlen's Gong



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March 9 Birmingham University
March 10 Bangor University.
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ARISTA

Produced by Pierre Moerlen with Nick Bradford at Matrix Studio.

Listen fine

The Noble Art of Survival

Loser bands, vampires and Breakdowns — what to do until your lucky number (1 in 1,000,000) arrives.

TOE-NEE PAH-SONS talks to LAY-NA LUV-ITCH

"CHILL-DRUN BE-HAYYYVE!!"

THE enchanted trouper with the heart of gold and matching hit single premier Stiffette, it's official!! — sashays on stage and The Shandells go Slavic Motown. Friday night is a dehydrating sow in a sauna, here comes the weekend. Packed post-punk pilchards in a jock-baroque University Union gym as roomy as a rush-hour Tokyo commuter tube, the youth of Bristol sweat, strain and suffer for a glimpse at/a better view of/eye-to-eye contact with a pretty, plaited bullet of such awesome, mercurial magnitude that the latest Gibb Bros '45 looks like a sleeper in comparison.

Her silken ginger-bread coloured barnet covered except for the iconoclastic braided bits by a black lace Balken cranium shawl, her threads very Disney girl Good Witch, when Lene Lovich smiles you know that if she was a gypsy she'd *give* you the pegs.

Click, click: Addam's Family in the flesh, L. L. Morticia and Little Wednesday both to Les Chappell's shaded Uncle Fester chrome-domed mock-malevolence on guitar not lightbulb. *Rhythm* guitar — Chappell plays his instrument like a zither, a chopped and scrubbed washboard, while the economical lead lines are left to the keyboards. Full, rich noise, in the pocket, to the point, pumping and punchy and poppy, crafted but hold the frills.

Spreading her hands expansively, indicating the crowd with amused affection, she got the vulnerable-tough aura of your image of Piaf (something about the shoulders).

"I think we're alone now," she promises the pandemonium.

And, the way she tells it, it makes sense . . .

"I GET EDGY," says Lene Lovich, "If I feel I'm bleeding into the crowd. I'm always particular about what I wear . . . when I was seven or eight I had this one dress which I wore every day. I drove my mother crazy! It was a party dress — blue with white dots on it. the kind of dots that stand up on the material, y'know? *Embossed.* I wore it even when I was too big for it . . . then it disappeared one day, I don't know what happened to it . . ."

Maybe it's at the bottom of your suitcase.

"Well, I still have the same suitcase I had when I was a kid."

Tea for two in the *Holiday Inn* coffee shop a few hours before showtime and I'm reflecting that all those reams of fantasy-projection copy devoted to "The Cold Pole" and the release of her "Stateless" album last autumn were sure sniffing up the wrong ice madchen.

Lene Lovich; a character conceived? An alias adopted? A persona bowied for pleasure and profit?

No, said he, none of these. The secret is out — behind the good-looking, glossy Grimm Brothers veneer of a compulsively idiosyncratic individual bewitched by demonic forces she's learned to turn to her own advantage lies the heart, soul and spirit of a compulsively idiosyncratic individual bewitched by demonic forces she's learned to turn to her own advantage . . .

You done many drugs. Lene?

"No, not a lot, really, because I've had a lot of trouble with my mind over the years," she laughs. "I don't know if people should know about this!" she chuckles again, then becoming serious. "I've been very concerned . . . I've been trying to be *normal* from when I was a kid. I did have a lot . . . my mind . . . I felt wasn't normal. I went through a lot of traumatic things when I was a kid, when I was little, but I think I've got a lot of natural intelligence, I think I'm smart enough to keep quiet about it . . . I was very, very nearly put into a mental hospital but . . . I . . . *read-the-note!!*" she beams.

Lucid, likeable Lene; she talks with a faint American accent that has been buried by years in this precious jewel, this England. She's either grinning ear-to-ear, using riotous roars of contagious laughter instead of full-stops or else she's dead-pan thoughtful, pale blue wide-eyed expressive. When she's like this her voice is as rational and reasonable as can be BUT with a distinct edge of, well, *madness.*

Like some ostensibly ultra-normal monster-child in a psycho-terror movie, like "They're Coming To Take Me Away, Ha-Ha". Napolean XIV, like Paula Prentice as the beautiful, beautific bohemian in *What's New Pussycat?*, cool, calm, collected and crazed.

The difference is, of course, that Lene is not putting it on. But if you think she's not great you're full of shit.

"The guy, the doctor, gave me the sealed envelope and told me to go see this psychiatrist in the hospital. This was when I was eighteen. But I'd known there were things that weren't normal about me since I was a child. I was clever enough to keep quiet about it. But sometimes circumstances make you act irrationally and I irrationally was persuaded to go and see a doctor and I went . . ."

Lene says she thinks the trouble stems from a hyper-vivid imagination with no creative outlet ("If you can't channel it positively it can turn inward and hurt you"). There's also the factor of a childhood so tragic that it makes every punk who ever got bored in a tower block on Social Security amphetamine sulphate stained bondage strides look like a screaming nelly. But more of that later. The trouble began when the visions statted to get out of hand . . .

"I feel as if I can handle myself now, I'm mentally okay . . . but back then, I'd be, say, sitting on the tube — it's all right when it's in control but when it gets out of control it gets serious — and suddenly I'd see a horde of monkeys swinging on those hand-grips that hang down and they'd be screaming. I'd be sitting there laughing — it was funny! — then it would fade and I'd be left sitting there with everyone on the train staring at me and I'd feel *strange.*"

"It got very dangerous . . . I found myself sitting on a window ledge quite a few stories up and my friend found me there. I was perfectly happy! I wasn't going to jump or anything! I had this feeling like I was a cat and apparently I was making these funny *noises!*" We both guffawed manically and wait until we've subsided to silly giggles until 'ene continues. "My friend freaked out and told me I should go see a doctor. But in the end I decided I could cope myself."

"Home is where the heart is/Home is so remote/Home is just emotion/Sticking in my throat/Let's go to your place/Let's go to your place/Home is hard to swallow/Home is like a rock/Home is good clean living/Home is. I forgot/Let's go to your place/Let's go to your place/Home is so suspicious/Home is close control/Home is "Will you miss us?"/Home is "I don't know"/Let's go to your place/Let's go to your place/Home is aggravation/Home is so much fuss/Home is mind your

■ *Continues over page*

Pik-chers: JORJ BOD-NAR

PAUL KING for OUTLAW CONCERTS present

THE TRB TWO TOUR

SWANSEA TOP RANK
Tuesday 20th March

EXETER ROUTES
Wednesday 21st March

PLYMOUTH POLYTECHNIC
Thursday 22nd March

COVENTRY TIFFANYS
Tuesday 27th March

SUNDERLAND MAYFAIR
Wednesday 28th March

SOUTHPORT NEW THEATRE
Thursday 29th March

NOTTINGHAM MALIBU
Friday 30th March

BRIDLINGTON SPA PAVILION
Saturday 31st March

BLACKBURN KING GEORGES HALL
Sunday 1st April

DUNSTABLE CALIFORNIA
Tuesday 3rd April

HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN HALL
Wednesday 4th April

SOUTHAMPTON GAUMONT
Thursday 5th April

GUILDFORD CIVIC HALL
Friday 6th April

LEWISHAM ODEON
Saturday 7th April

WOLVERHAMPTON CIVIC HALL
Sunday 8th April

ILFORD ODEON
Monday 9th April

IPSWICH GAUMONT
Tuesday 10th April

TRB TWO
THE NEW ALBUM FROM THE TOM ROBINSON BAND
EMC 3296

LAY-NA KON-TIN-UED

■ *From previous page*

business/Thank you very much/Let's go to your place/Let's go to your place/I don't wanna go back/I don't wanna go back/I don't wanna go back anymore . . ."

TRANSITION through alienation. And Lene's rootlessness, skirting of insanity and family home-life horrorshow are all inextricably bound together like some psychosomatic Weaver's Answer plait that seem to stem from her father.

The American born son of a Yugoslav immigrant to the USA, he was put into an institution for disturbed children after his father met an untimely, violent death in the woods near their home.

"The thing about my father is that he had a pretty horrendous childhood. Too! His own father got shot in a hunting expedition accident when he was quite young. But it was under . . . very dubious circumstances . . . my grandmother bunged my father into a kids' home. I don't think anyone ever went to see him and I think he grew up a bit strange because of that. It's funny — when you don't think you're wanted as a kid it can screw you up, y'know?"

Lene gets her Slavik-Yank blood from her father and her English corpuscles from her mother, a G.I. bride who met her husband when he was over here during World War Two, getting married and forsaking the land fit for heroes for the land of opportunity. Actually, it was life on the breadline in Detroit, with three daughters and one son to feed, clothe and raise.

"My father would try very hard to support us and he was very concerned with making sure we had enough to eat. He worked as an engineer and in a sewage plant and he'd work swing-shifts so that sometimes he had to work nearly 24 hours non-stop. It was all extremes — he'd work very hard to work to make sure we'd have a good Christmas and then he'd spoil it all by going berserk on Christmas day . . . and it would all end . . . a mistake."

A compassionate realist, Lene, sadly ruminating on the plight of the man who she reckons gave her the creative bent while shedding no tears that eventually her mother took the children and fled to Yorkshire, England.

At first her father planned to join them at a later date, then decided against it.

"I wasn't going back. I appreciated what he tried to do for us but I couldn't stand his rages, they were frightening. It was clear he didn't recognise us."

And after the separation, the divorce. Were you upset?

"Not upset, no. Relieved."

AN independent girl, Lene, who paradoxically leans heavily on her bald beau Les Chappell.

She's known him half her life, they were kids together in the same hometown, and when things began crumbling around her once more at home (her mother taking up with a man who was "heavy-handed", her sister hanging out with Hell's Angels and, one by one, the entire remainder of the Lovich clan all going back to the States to give it a try without father — except her) they went down to London together to attend Art School. "I've grown up with him. He means a lot to me."

"They were into intellectualizing Art, *talking* about it, and everything I did was instinctive. I believed 'em for a while."

Next came her saxophone lessons (from herself) and the star-crossed straightahead soul band The Diversions with Les, the combo folding almost exactly three years ago and Lene took off for Europe (but not before a Christmas song cut for Polydor, a brief, unhappy aquaintance). When 1976 and all that was happening she was working with carnival fire-eaters, singing James Bond songs in cabaret for obese German business men, playing dead bodies and screaming victims in Vampire films, and writing the words for "Supernature" for Cerrone (closer to a quality Biddu than a surrogate Moroder is old Cerrone).

Back in Babylon sweet Babylon late in 1977 Lene and Les false-start with The Exiles but Charlie Gillett gives a raw, spirited demo of them doing "I Think We're Alone Now" to Stiff's Dave Robinson . . . contracts, the first, flop single, the album, the tour, "Lucky Number" and the *Top Of The Pops* — given access to a million front rooms . . .

Eight score-draws! Claims by telegram! Paydirt!

Whatever happened to Rachel Sweet?

"Yeah,-you-look-pretty-good-to-me!/Yeah, YOU-got-lotsa-energy!

SHE points a finger at some kid in the crowd and one hundred kids crushed together in vaguely that direction all begin to frantically pogo until their brains are running out of their ears to confirm Lene's observation.

"But-I'll-say-when-to-stop/Hey, I'll-call-the-shots/I'll-say-when/Said, I'll-say-when!"

As one, the band run through their regular calisthenical choreography routine during the frantic, "Say When". It's a show all right, guts and greasepaint, no old bollocks within a five mile radius of the venue. Everything on "Stateless" is heightened in the live context; "Home" is more bitter, deperate, aching; "Too Tender To Touch" more yearning, anguished, platonic fuck-up; "One In 1,000,000" more flying sparks at full throttle and "Lucky Number,' more overflowing with quirks, strangeness and charm. There's also a new song called "Joan" performed for only the third time ever, all roasted saints and hallucinogenic satoris "for all the girls in the audience",

Lene alternates between hanging from the mike stand like ol' J.R. himself, dancing with arms casually waving in the air like a slow motion action replay of Edith impersonating Pinnochio and blowing sweet and long on her sax so ferociously that her plaits stand on end.

And you can take all these comparisons with Patti Smith, Blondie and all the rest and shove 'em. This mob are like an exuberant reincarnation of Love Affair with a core of joyful Stax-appeal grit, coated with Detroit steel, a Slavic reel and Yorkshire pudding.

Slavic Motown. Michael Jackson could just eat them.

"OF course. a lot of people recognise me now," smiles Lene, replenishing my cup.

"But it's usually they recognise me with a smile and not with a brick or something, so I like it."

Everbody on the second Stifftour seemed to get on so well it looked too good to be true . . .

"I know, I know, in fact Eric and I got together and we were trying to think up some really nasty rumours!"

You rich, Lene?

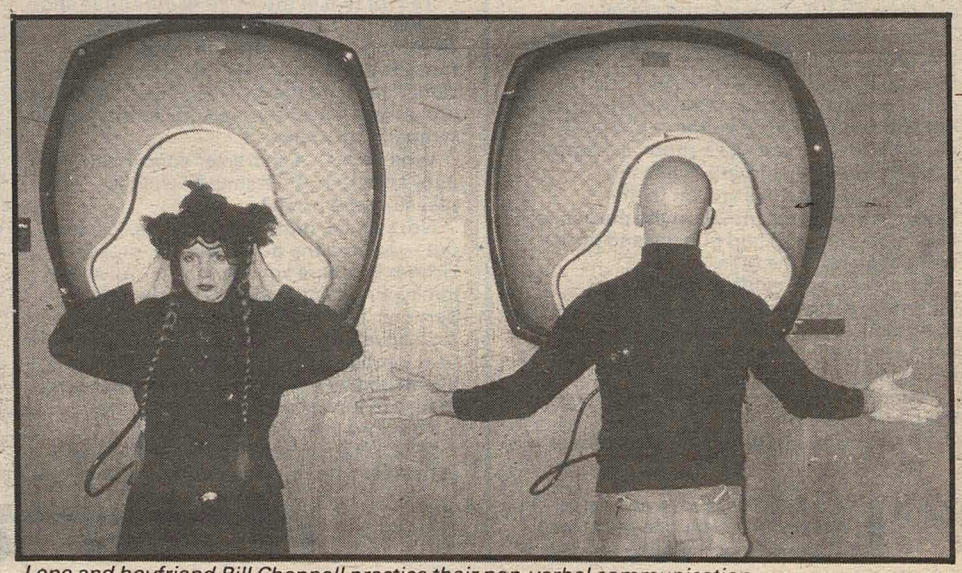
"No, I owe Stiff a lot of money for the album — I don't know exactly, a few thousand pounds — and there's debts that I've run up over the years that I've got to pay off. As soon as the money comes in it'll go straight out again. Like, my saxophone needs a service for a start; I've been botching it together for years."

For a young woman currently enjoying the first flush of success after years of slogging away in the showbiz netherworld, Lene Lovich displays an astounding humility when discussing her future plans, saying that she understands and respects Stiff's policy of concentrating all their efforts on making, breaking and sustaining an act's success before devoting the time, energy and money on the rest of the roll-call.

But she's got time and space to breathe — after mental hospitals, vampire blood-lust, major labels and the cabaret circuit, what could anyone possibly do to her now?

"Stiff are sensible in the way they run things, like everbody has their turn and everybody works real hard for them. I've had my turn and now it's somebody else's . . ."

Okay, Wreckless, off you go.



Lene and boyfriend Bill Chappell practice their non-verbal communication

motörhead

OVER KILL

'OVERKILL' the album & single

Produced by Jimmy Miller BRON 515 BRO 67

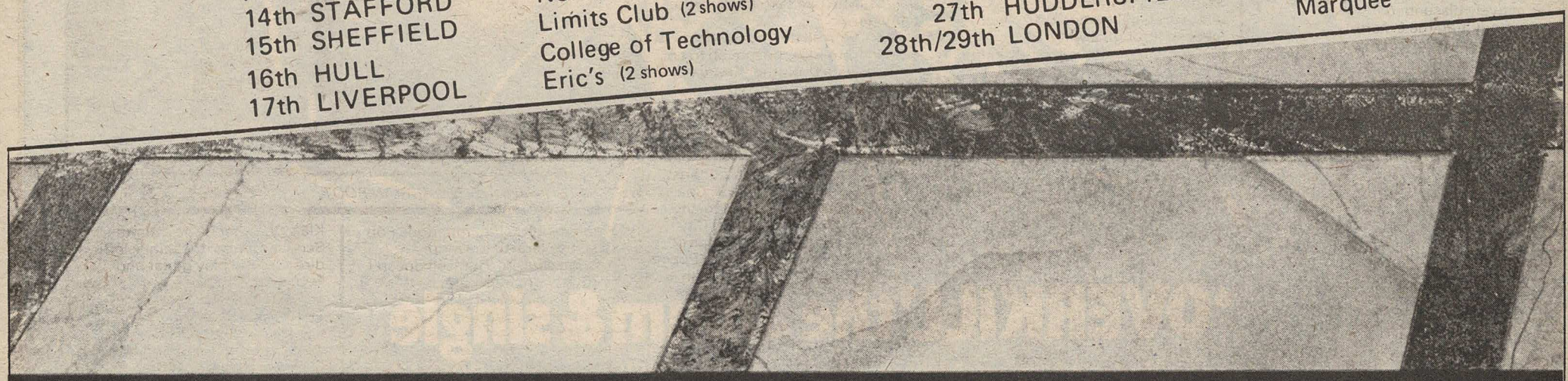
On Tour

24th March	St. Alban's City Hall	31st March	Friars, Aylesbury
26th March	Newcastle City Hall	1st April	Lyceum
27th March	Edinburgh Odeon	2nd April	Portsmouth Guildhall
28th March	Glasgow Apollo	3rd April	Derby Assembly Rooms
30th March	Cambridge Corn Exchange	4th April	Sheffield City Hall
		5th April	Liverpool Empire
7th April	Birmingham Odeon		
8th April	Leicester De Montfort		
9th April	Hanley Victoria Hall		
10th April	Bristol Colston Hall		
11th April	Manchester Free Trade		
12th April	Bradford St Georges Hall		

BRONZE

SKIDS TOUR DATES

7th	YORK	Pop Club	
8th	LEEDS	Fan Club	
9th	BIRMINGHAM	Barbarellas	
10th	PORTSMOUTH	Polytechnic	
11th	PLYMOUTH	Metro	
14th	STAFFORD	North Staffs Polytechnic	
15th	SHEFFIELD	Limits Club (2 shows)	
16th	HULL	College of Technology	
17th	LIVERPOOL	Eric's (2 shows)	
19th	EDINBURGH	Tiffanys (2 shows)	
20th	GLASGOW	College of Art	
21st	ABERDEEN	City Hall	
23rd	MANCHESTER	Russell Club (2 shows)	
24th	MIDDLESBOROUGH	Rock Garden (2 shows)	
25th	DUNFERMLINE	Kinema Ballroom	
27th	HUDDERSFIELD	Polytechnic	
28th/29th	LONDON	Marquee	



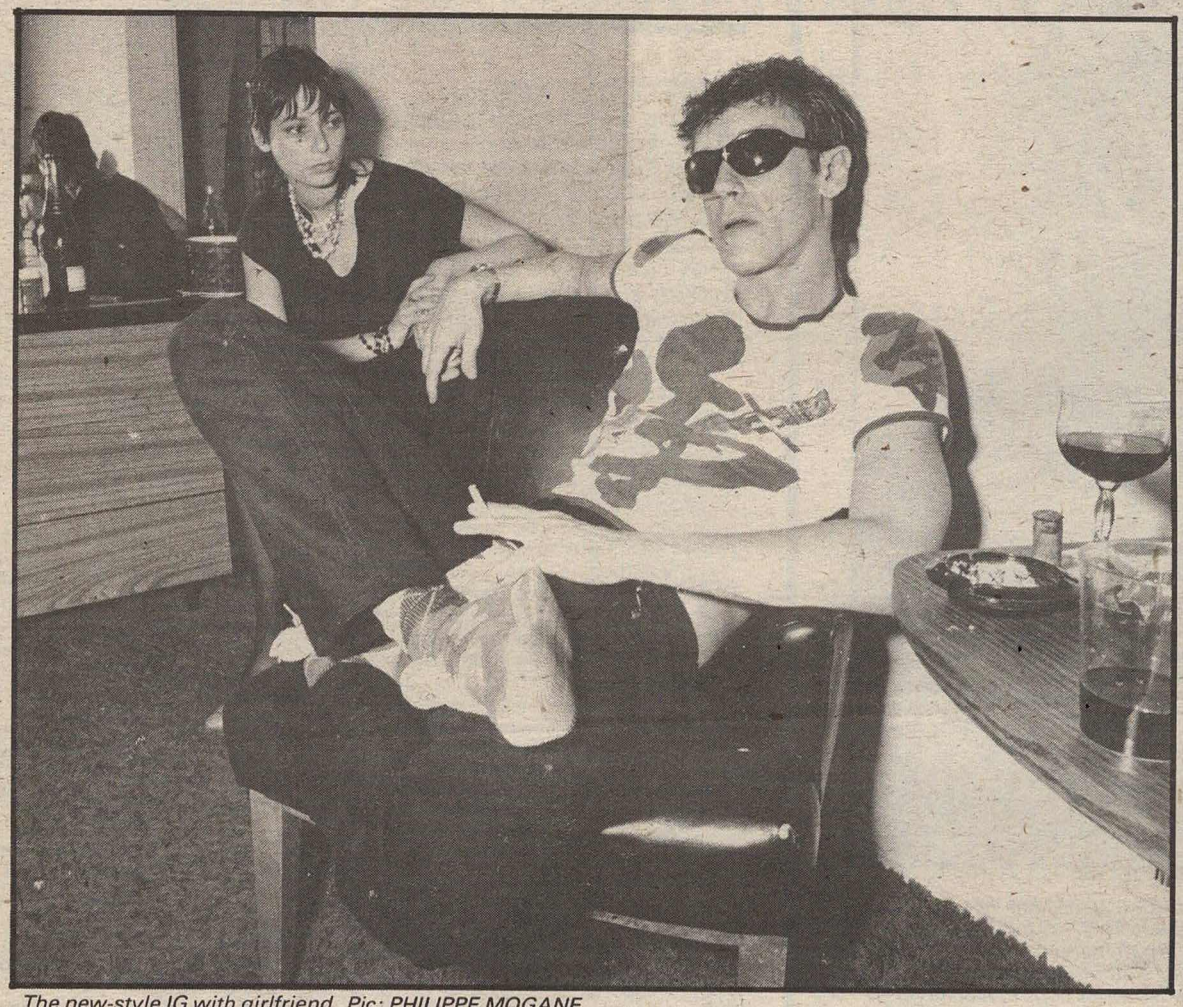
SCARED TO DANCE

THEIR NEW ALBUM OUT NOW ON VIRGIN RECORDS V2116

Available on Cassette.

Virgin

THRILLS



The new-style IG with girlfriend Pic: PHILIPPE MOGANE

Latest Exploits Of The Self-Styled World's Most Wanted Boy.

THE RUMOURS: Iggy Pop nee James Osterburg retired from rock'n'roll at least temporarily, got married to his lady friend of several years, Esther, and is the father of the child she gave birth to some months back in West Berlin. The professional association with David Bowie was not amicably terminated, though the two still live in virtually the same house.

In recent months RCA and Osterburg parted company and in between low-profile appearances at anonymous beer kellers, most friends and associates have been actively dissuaded from frequenting the Osterbrug residence. Word of musical reactivity was mooted with Tangerine Dream drummer Klaus Krueger the only associate in this quasi-ressurection. In December, a further hazy rumour claimed that Osterburg was returning to the studio, re-united with former Stooges musical director James Willimason.

The Facts: Iggy Pop did not get married and the child was aborted, although he still lives with photographer Esther in a two-room flat in Berlin.

The professional and creative alliance with Bowie has been terminated due to Pop's desire to finally go it alone in terms of being in complete control of his creative output. His aforementioned anti-social behaviour was in fact caused through a wilful determination to totally master the guitar, an instrument that Fred 'Sonic' Smith of the MC5 believed Jim was born to play.

After months and months of coming to terms with the instrument and finding both the sound and style he desired, he penned seven solo numbers — arranging all the guitar parts. While in Berlin he also met up with Klaus Krueger, an excellent rock'n'roll drummer whose work with Tangerine Dream gives no indication of his true style.

Having, with the invaluable assistance of David Bowie, extracted himself from RCA, he retained connections with the label's Artist Liaison Person, Peter Davies, who has since become his manager.

Then, with all the money he'd earned from RCA, he moved to Los Angeles with drummer Kreuger and enlisted the aid of old partner-in-crime James Williamson as producer.

The trio, along with an acquaintance of Williamson's, one Jacke Clarke, a black lead guitarist formerly employed by Ike & Tina Turner on bass, John Harden, the brilliant saxophonist on 'Kill City' and, most importantly in terms of input, another ex-Stooge and Pop's musical director, Scott Thurston, went to work at L.A.'s Paramount studio.

The result is an album of 12 brief but incendiary little epics with the title 'Don't Look Down'. The latter, incidentally, is the name of the only song bearing a 'Pop / Williamson' credit, although Williamson contributed much to the editing of lyrics and compositions.

Similarly Williamson plays only one guitar solo, choosing instead to concentrate on exacting production duties — from the treatments of guitar sound to employing such unlikely entities as the original Alfonso Sisters, whose angelic vocalese can be heard complementing the imperious Pop rasp on several of the more arresting cuts. Pop himself doesn't play guitar on the album, by the way. He uses Scott Thurston to play note for note the riffs he's concocted.

Release is set for early April. Although no final running order has been set, the songs will be 'New Values', 'Contribution', 'Billy Is A Runaway', 'Angel', 'Don't Look Down', 'Lucky Guy', 'Girls', 'Endless Sea' (previewed at the Pop / Sonic Smith Music Machine gig last year) 'African Man', 'How Do You Fix A Broken Past', 'Five Foot One', and 'I'm Bored'.

To back up the goods on vinyl, Pop has currently assembled a band to lend muscle to the punch. Jackie Clarke moves to guitar, Klaus Kreuger is the drummer, Scott Thurston, the band's official director, will play guitar and keyboards. But the real coup is the arrival of one Glen Matlock, no fly-by-night sideman but a fully-fledged Iggy Pop Band member who'll be doing both the European and U.S. tours.

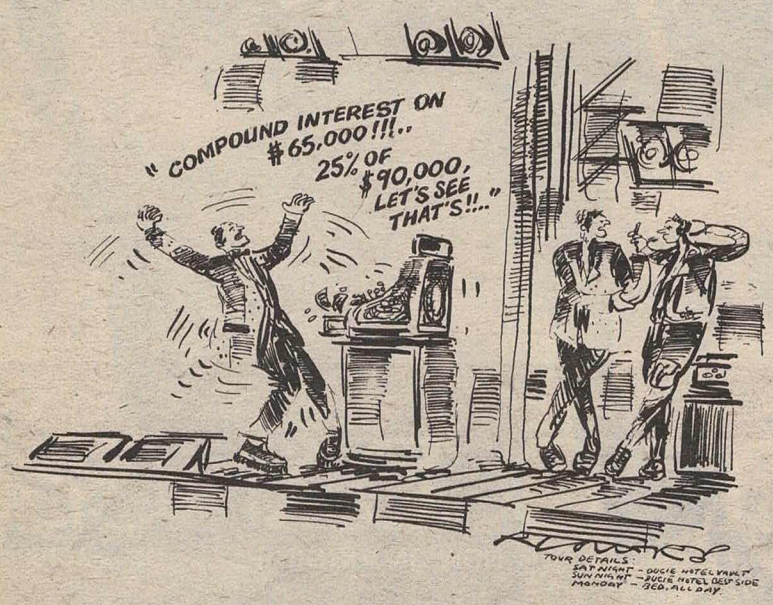
Steve Jones was also considered as a possible member but that appears to have been scuppered.

Meanwhile Hammersmith Palais looks like being the London date. The mighty Pop vindicated past debacles last year at the Music Machine. This year he's primed to kill. Are *you* ready for the final solution?

NICK KENT

THRILLS

LOWRY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"He's one of the last great undiscovered giants of rock and roll — the Sun label accountant."

WHAT'S UPSET THE UPSETTER?

PROSPECTS of more Upsetter music such as that celebrated in this week's *Singles* column are in serious doubt following reports from Jamaica that the mental equilibrium of celebrated producer Lee Scratch Perry is highly disarranged.

Over recent weeks Perry had engaged on an apparently insane destruction of his Balck Ark studio / home premises in Kingston.

To begin with he had defaced the murals in his yard, painting giant black crosses over many and scrawling the word 'Ijax' — a word whose significance is apparent only to Perry himself — plentifully on walls and floors.

Inside the famous studio much of the equipment has been removed or extensively damaged and the wreckage left in a heap, while Perry has been observed attacking the still-standing mixing console with a screwdriver. He has also removed his gallery of Bruce Lee and Bob Marley photos and defaced pictures of himself.

Normally a hive of activity, Black Ark is now largely deserted, and Perry's family gone elsewhere.

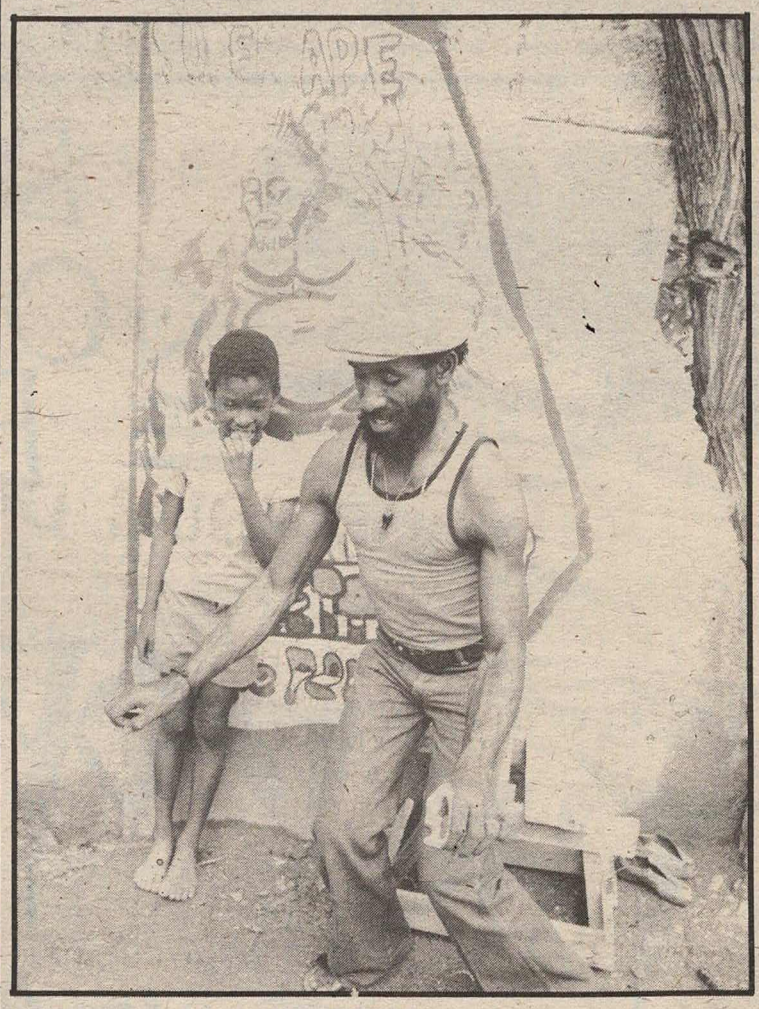
A highly individual and energetic force in reggae music since the early '60s, boasting a copious and impressive track record with a whole heap of artists, Perry has always been an idiosyncratic and unpredictable figure, his zany activities at the studio console legendary.

He built Black Ark in 1972 and has rarely been inactive since. His successes include producing many classic Wailer / Marley discs, his own 'Return Of Django' and Susan Cadogan's 'Hurt So Good' — pop hits in '69 and '73 respectively — Junior Murvin's 'Police And Thieves', Max Romeo's 'War In A Babylon', and an incessant stream of his own records. He also worked with The Clash on 'Complete Control'.

This time The Upsetter has seemingly taken one step too many. A speedy passage to the storm. All lovers of Jah music know that better must come.

THE SUPER APE

THRILLS



SCRATCH sinks Ark. Pic: ADRIAN BOOT

ARCHIVE FUN

WELL, LOOKA HERE! What's all this? Here comes that man again . . . the finely-chiselled features of Miss Lucy's celebrated beau Edward Cochran, caught in reflective post-nervous breakdown pose, modelling late '50s punk dernier cri. *So voss a nice boy like this doing in the scuzzy columns of* NME, *when he's been busy the past two decades or so pushing up violets? Well, looka here! All things come around again, and currently Mr Cochran's back in the news again, courtesy of that other defuncto John James Sid Vicious Ritchie Beverley — no stranger to THRILLS in his own right — who's careering up the national chart in this present late '70s era with Ed's own "Something Else", recorded prior to our Sid climbing those three steps to heaven to join his hero amid the Elysian Fields. You're sure fine looking, maaaaan.*

THRILLS

Incensed (geddit?) by NME incivilities, Steve Hillage put carrot to paper and sent us the following artichoke

RECENTLY, *NME* and I have not had the rosiest of associations.

Nick Kent's review of 'Live Herald' was the last straw.

When are these ghouls going to realise that our music and what it transmits is as relevant to NOW as anything else, and is certainly NOT the out-of-date pose of a dead fashion.

Although I use music to channel ideas and energies that get me off, I always try to ensure that if none of this interests you, you will still find some uplifting music. Whatever level they take it on, considerable numbers of people, both here and in Europe and America continue to buy our records and come to our concerts. Our audiences are a complete cross-section, including a lot of young people who are too young to remember anything about 1967 and all that.

I do not consider the audience reactions we get to be those of a load of "Hippy fools" and as I try to meet as many of them as possible, I KNOW that they are a great bunch of people.

I accuse Nick Kent of insulting their intelligence.

When you come to one of our concerts you don't just see me, you see a band, and Nick Kent totally fails to mention the various musicians that I am lucky enough to play with. They've all made invaluable contributions towards bringing the music to life. Musicianship is an essential part of what we are doing — not lifeless, elitist technoflash — but the simple skills necessary to make a musical vision dance.

We want people to dance to our music. And we want to play from the heart.

We are also blessed with a large group of friends with whom we share the same vision, and on the road I find myself often putting new people in touch with other people, thus spreading the network. While it would be looney to claim that there is a mass movement dedicated to putting over so-called 'New Age' ideas and energies through rock music, there's definitely something happening.

We're not just pissing in the wind.

We might not be Top of the Pops but we're definitely a power in the land. It's NOT hippies and LSD and 1967 any more than it's vegetarian theosophists and 1932. It's here and now 1979 and given the right heft the thing could take off at any moment.

I feel that any artist has a responsibility to state forcefully his own opinions and observations through his work.

My controversial lyrics might be a little clumsy at times but they aim to convey feelings and information that are original, challenging and honest. It's a genuine attempt to make exoteric (widely known) what was esoteric (secret knowledge known only to a few).

I have found that the things I refer to in my lyrics have improved the quality of MY life and if they do the same for any of my audience I consider them worthwhile.

Reality is what it's all about.

Although Nick Kent can point to many aspects that fire his critical furnace, I'm convinced that his loathing of our music is based on his reality clashing with ours. I'm sure both Nick and myself want our music to be real, a reflection of what's really going on. I assume that Nick wants to see rock music used as a force for change and revolutionary liberation.

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17TH - ST PAULS CHURCH COVENT GDN - (+LINTON + MANICURED NOISE)
22ND DERBY (+ALTERNATIVE TV +LINTON KWESI JOHNSON +MANICURED NOISE)
31ST CHELTENHAM TOWN HALL (+ALTERNATIVE TV +LINTON KWESI JOHNSON +MANICURED NOISE)
rough trade
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The 'far-out' world of Steve Hillage

We appear to share a common love for Hendrix. What divides us is that I think meaningful change on a global basis is only possible with an accompanying expansion of awareness and an acceptance of spiritual energy as a factor to be brought into play. Every individual has a responsibility. Never mind the CIA, KGB, Mafia etc — the fundamental conspiracy lives in our heads. If we feed a divided reality we will have wars and injustices — the same as if I refuse to tune my guitar I'm likely to sound well duff. I don't want to label my reality, I want it to be as wide as possible. I'm not into swapping one set of addictive beliefs for another, nor am I dealing with escapism.

Eventually music, politics and philosophy are dealing with the same thing — the harmonising of opposing forces into a greater whole.

Our featured use of synthesisers is, I consider, one of the most advanced still working with a rock rhythm section. It's not "irritating doodlings" but a serious attempt to use music to protray the "non-physical". I suppose Nick Kent has no truck with the non-physical, with Psi phenomenon, clairvoyance, and out-of-the-boady experience. Bah! he may say, but he ends up in a very reactionary position.

But listen, Nick, the reality that's produced warring political failures (Capitalism and Communism) and warring "religions" (viz Northern Ireland, Middle East) and general social Duffville, is the same reality that refuses to admit the non-physical parallel of the physical world

HILLAGE after a night on the pith. *Pic MATTHEW TAYLOR*

We're not trying to escape from the physical — I dig the physical (yes siree!) but in the end it is but one colour in the spectrum and above all I dig Rainbows.

What I'm trying to put over is what I consider to be aspects of the REAL revolution — the REALITY revolution. Not some phoney excuse to play with real guns using totally outmoded Victorian ideology.

I'm NOT saying that political struggle is pointless — far from it — but without an expanded reality the revolution won't be worth a bat's fart.

I'm sorry if Nick Kent can't see any value in my music but to call it jazz-rock is a desperate attempt to label for convenience something he doesn't understand.

Labels like that and "guitar-hero" are meaningless crap — journalistic poison that contaminates the whole music spectrum.

So . . . sensational evolutionary progress or total global destruction? It's up to you and me. Maybe neither, but whichever way it goes the new social problems are more likely to be those of leisure than of work — because eventually the need for oppressively boring jobs is going to fade.

Nonetheless, right now economic factors are forcing people to do degrading and humiliating jobs. In both cases, wouldn't it be great if more attention were paid to the inner aspects of mankind and individual creativity was put back into people's lives?

This is the stuff 1979, 1989 and 1999. It's up to all of us, me, Nick Kent and you the reader to determine which way it will go.

Oh, and Nick, I hope you got the going second-hand rate on the review copies of my albums.

See you soon.

THRILLS

ONE WEEK he's in polka dots, the next week he's in stripes. The week after that he goes back to those nebbish polka dots again. He's . . . a misguided follower of fashion.

Recently One Of Our Reviewars tagged a few discreet sartorial hints onto the end of his review of the wimpful one's 'Look Sharp' waxing, stating that he didn't. Jackson's immediate response was to jettison the neckwear in favour of something a mite more *moderne.* A glance at Joe's boat race shows the positive effects of taking *NME's* advice (dare we hope that Kiss will follow suit?).

Yet sadly, up-to-datest live shots show that the former Portsmouth Playboy club house pianist has now reverted to his original neckwear, with sad but predictable outcome. (Career hits doldrums/people titter and point in the street/hairline recedes even further . . .)

THRILLS

Earth, Wind & Fire. Three magic albums, 85p off.

Earth, Wind & Fire are currently in Britain using magic and mystery to create some stunning stage shows. But Boots special offer of 85p off their three greatest albums is no illusion.

Come to Boots before March 24th and see for yourself.

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Strangled In A Strange Land

BURNEL BLACK-BELTS LAWMEN ON AUSSIE BADWILL TOUR

NOT SO VERY long after Her Majesty returned from the Middle East, The Stranglers left for their first major tour of Australia — on a badwill mission of the kind we have learned to expect from the fractious foursome.

Their plane touched down on the Australian continent just under two weeks ago. The first item on their itinerary was a live TV appearance on a nationwide prime-time chat show called *Willesey At 7.*

It turned out to be a virtual re-run of the Sex Pistols / Grundy debacle.

Willesey's opener was to invite The Strnglers to "be outrageous". So they clowned for the cameras — which they thought were only recording and not actually transmitting — until the host was presumably sufficiently outraged. He then asked why the group was called The Stranglers, to which a Strangler replied, "Why are you called Howard?"

His next thrust must have caught them unprepared. "What do you think of animals in punk?" he postulated.

"You mean buggery"' said an understandably bemused Jean-Jaques — at which point the broadcast was cut.

Willesey re-appeared moments later voicing the usual affronted upright citizen's disgust and calling The Stranglers "*worse* than punk" (gasp!).

Ticket sales boomed. Natch.

Their first gig in Sydney caused more distress amongst prudish sectors of Aussie society when they introduced the stripper routine, augmented to include male strippers as well.

During the gig The Stranglers dealt with a female reporter from *The Australian* whose line of questioning didn't suit them by throwing her into the crowd, thereby earning themselves extra bonus points in the recently reported *Sun* Dork — *sorry,* Aggro Test.

It was the state of Queensland, though, that received the brunt of The Stranglers' antagonism.

Australia is run along the lines of the US: Autonomous states with a Parliament for national policy. Queensland is notorious for its extreme right-wing, anti-communist Premier Joh Bjelke-Peterson. He has been premier for the past 16 years, allegedly running the state on a blatant gerrymander — manipulating the boundaries of the electorate to ensure his vote.

A few years ago Joh the Jerk, as he's known locally, banned public marches and imposed curfews in some areas, since when there have been many clashes between dissenting demonstrators and state police. Another aspect of Joh's policies has been to make Queensland the most repressive state in Australia — not even *Playboy* is sold there.

From the day they arrived The Stranglers took to running down Joh the Jerk whenever the media were within earshot, and of course the strippers were also guaranteed to rock the boat. It was a foregone conclusion that their show in Brisbane, Queensland's capital, would be, ah, eventful.

The hard-core punk contingent spread through the crowd immediately betrayed the state police presence — because there are few punks, as such, in Brisbane.

It isn't clear at which point the ill-disguised lawmen decided to halt proceedings, but they did — and in somewhat physical circumstances.

The upshot was that Cornwell stopped a bottle with his head and required stitches, and Jean-Jacques laid out two state cops then hastily went to ground until such time as The Stranglers' entourage had crossed the state line.

Hugh Cornwell and Dave Greenfield were last seen on Saturday morning TV in Sydney putting out a mayday for the local hell's angels to lend them some motorbikes — British, natch — so they could burn rubber on the 250 mile trip to their gig in Canberra.

Manager Ian Grant says he doubts whether they'll finish more than half of the tour.

NED KELLY

Wallaby Your Man — JJB plus kuddly koala by BARBARA FRY

The Lone Groover — BENYON

I JUST HEARD YOR NEW SINGLE, MAN, IT'S GREAT!
IT CATERS TO A RILLY MINORITY GROUP.
?
I MEAN WHO ELSE, BEFORE YOU, WAS RAISIN' TH' BANNER FOR
MANIC DEPRESSIVES?
I TOLD 'EM NOT T'PRESS TH' FIRST THOUSAND ON BLACK VALILIM!

THRILLS

MY mum gave me lots of bits from the larder—old cheese, flour, bits of fat, crusts of bread and so on.

I scraped out the syrup and condensed milk tins, mixed it all together and soaked it. Then I baked it all in mum's oven and made a cake for the birds —you should have seen them enjoy it.

A lot of people could make bird cakes like this instead of throwing things into the dustbin.
—Patti Smith, 12, Margate, Kent.

New York poetess' Good Food Guide turns out to be strictly for the birds. Spotted in the Daily Mirror by Trevor Owens.

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THRILLER

TO HOPE FOR

A LITTLE TIME

TRAPPED

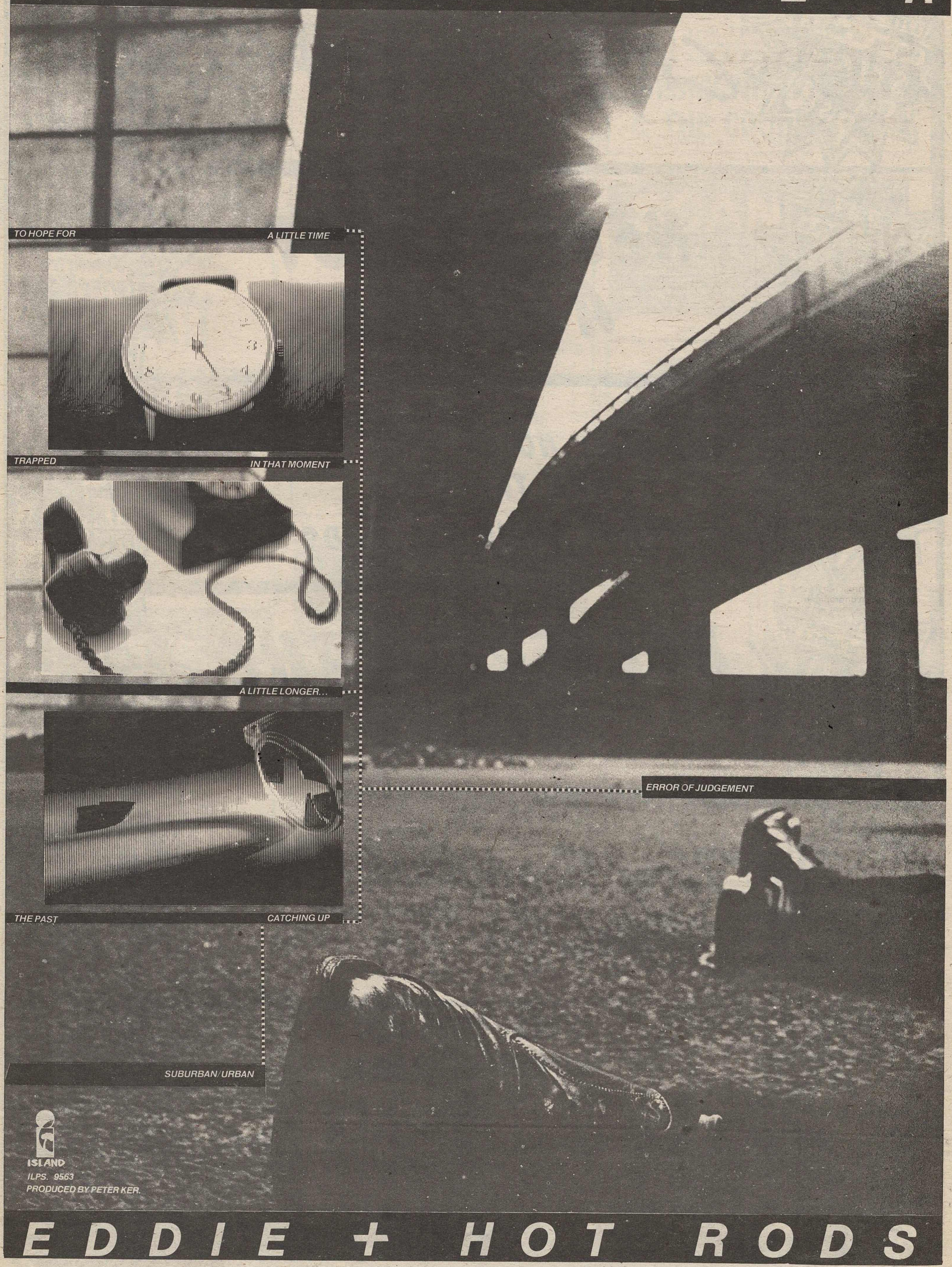
IN THAT MOMENT

A LITTLE LONGER...

THE PAST

CATCHING UP

SUBURBAN/URBAN



ERROR OF JUDGEMENT

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THE ONLY NOTES THAT MATTER ARE THE ONES THAT COME IN WADS

Sex PISTOLS Film Soundtrack Featuring 21 new tracks

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THE GREAT ROCK 'N' ROLL SWINDLE Sex PISTOLS

They Swindled Their Way To The Top

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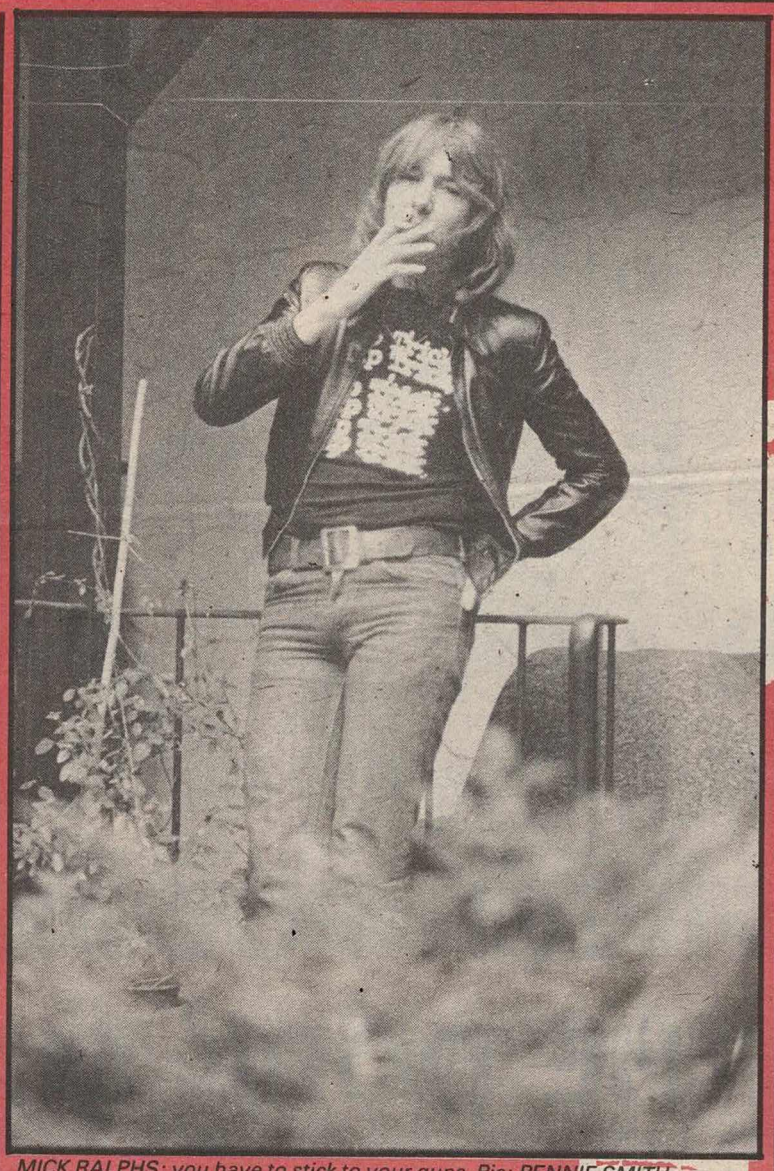


MICK RALPHS: you have to stick to your guns. Pic: PENNIE SMITH

BAD COMPANY. Crime: 'Reactionary' and Big In America. Ideal target practice for B.O.F. bounty hunters.

ROY CARR captures one live in a Newcastle bar and hears the case for the defence

WHEN PLACED under the heavy manners of unfavourable criticism few artists can handle the situation with the kind of self-derisory humour that was one of Marc Bolan's greatest assets.

Steve Harley versus The Press is the perfect case-book example of an artist becoming paranoid and abusive in defence of his facade, while The Eagles' ("America's Beatles!" to quote a spokesperson) method of lessening the odds is to refuse to meet the media unless copy/picture approval is guaranteed prior to publication. There are even instances on file of artists preferring to resort to physical violence rather than engage in an intelligent battle of wits.

Though still only 29 Mick Ralphs is far too long in the tooth to resort to any of these tactics. To his credit, he doesn't try and qualify either Bad Company's success or ignore the flak which (in many instances) is more concerned with a band's lifestyle than its music.

At the bar of Newcastle's Holiday Inn, Ralphs relaxes a couple of hours after the opening of Bad Company's first UK tour in something like four years. As with all first nights, the 16-song set plus three encores was — for at least the first half — plagued with the kind of human errors which Ralph opines should (hopefully) be eradicated once the tour begins to roll South.

Though a great deal of New Wave rhetoric has been expounded since Bad Company last hit the British trail (as can be ascertained from the no-less-than-ecstatic denim-clad hysteria that accompanied the first of thee consecutive Tyneside shows), the reactionary forces within rock have not only chosen to reject the politics/values of rock's revitalized fourth generation, but — with the logos of such mind-mincers as Judas Priest, Rush, Sabbath, Nugent, Kiss and UFO brighly embroidered on their backs — are intent on putting up a united front in the face of possible change.

"All you can do," begins Ralphs, "is put your records in the shops, advertise your concerts and see what happens! If nobody wants to buy them. . .if nobody wants to see you, that's *their* prerogative and there's absolutely nothing at all you can do about it.

"When we announced this tour we didn't know if it would sell. As it happens, not only has it sold out but we had to add extra dates. It's always the public that has the final say in these matters."

True.

You don't need to forcibly interrogate Mick Ralphs. At times he poses both question and answer.

"I'm quite aware that a lot of people and a lot of papers feel that bands like Bad Company might over-justify their position and popularity, but then from the outset we've never been regarded as very trendy. I'd go so far as to say that the fact that because we've been so successful in the States is one reason why we've never ever been well received by the British press."

Formed at the end of 1973 and launched in Newcastle on March 9 the following year, Bad Company were probably one of the last bands to carry the much-abused *supergroup* sales tag: former members of successful units who pooled their resources/reputations in persuit of instant box-office appeal.

As far as British audiences were concerned the collective Free/Mott/Crimson affiliations carried considerable clout. Stateside, the fact that Bad Company were the first band signed to Led Zepplin's Swan Song label was sufficient to generate coast-to-coast attention.

Success was instant as their debut album and the single "Can't Get Enough" topped just about every major chart. Transatlantic popularity polls further confirmed that Bad Company were the most successfull new British band in ages, and overnight another British band was lost to America, where nothing succeeds like success and excess is its own reward.

Very little has been seen of Bad Company in this country since then.

Why?

Ralphs doesn't attempt to evade the question. In fact, he's somewhat embarrased by having neglected British audiences.

"It's O.K. to be wise after the event," he ponders, "but in this business things have a tendency to get out of control. With the release of our first album and single just about everything escalated much faster than we ever anticipated."

It usually takes three years of solid touring to crack the Colonies, but Bad Company discovered they were in an enviable position of being able to cut corners on their maiden voyage.

"Suddenly we were booked out for ten-week tours and then 12-week tours. We just seemed to be on the road all the time. The only free time we had was given over to recording. We rapidly lost all sense of time.

"Our last tour lasted for five solid months, by which time we felt like hamburgers. . .two million a day. We were just doing a job. The emotion had been completely drained and we knew it.

"We had to put a halt to things. It was either lay-up for some time or finish. Not because were was any dissent within the band, just that everything had become routine. We wanted to feel motivated instead of obliged to go out and perform.

"Either the limos, the parties, the caviar and the money come first and the music is of secondary importance or you look at the trimmings of success fc what they're really worth and if you're lucky realise they're not really worth all that much.

"It might all sound boring, mundane or whatever, but all that any musician wants to do is to enjoy playing and be accepted for what he does. But it's only the very strong who can push aside the temptations that are part of being successful.

"I'll be honest with you, our British background made it extremely hard for us to adjust to how America works.

"We just had to stop when we did and if we upset a lot of people by not touring Britain as much as we should have done. . .saying sorry sounds so lame!"

DURING BAD COMPANY'S period of inactivity the British music industry underwent its biggest shake-up in living memory. Myths were shattered, pedestals smashed, existing values rightfully questioned. Perhaps for the first time one could (effectively) knock success.

In Britain attempts were made to bring down, or at least chip away at the foundations of a self-righteous establishment, yet in America rock became the Establishment and as such enjoyed an all-time peak in popularity.

As far as the U.S. masses were concerned, the only New Wave (of interest) was middle-America getting off its backside to dance and the likes of such charlatans as Boston, Kansas, Meatloaf and Foreigner.

Ralphs is more than prepared to talk at lengths on the subject in hand. But first he wishes to define Bad Company's present position:

"I'll be the first to admit that our music isn't anything that merits in-depth analysis. There's no political issues involved and no controversy.

"We're a blues band full stop!

"We're nothing more than a club band playing our own brand of R&B who just happened to make it pretty big in America quicker than anyone anticipated.

"From the very start our aim was to try and generate the same of excitement. . .or whatever you want to call it. . .that made all the members in this band become rock musicians in the first place.

"We're not trying to escape from our blues roots. . .just attempting to update them as best we can. For instance, the '60s Stax-Volt era. . .Booker T & The MGs, Albert King, Sam & Dave, Otis Redding etc, was, and still is, a great source of inspiration to us all.

"OK, so in the present social climate — as far as Britain is concerned — Bad Company might not be considered trendy, but we've never ever gone out of our way to be trendy.

"And yet," he elaborates, "I don't think that feeling threatened by all these new bands is a bad thing, because like I've already said, if you're not careful you can get to the point where the limos and the caviar become the main attraction and the music secondary. So watch out.

"OK we did our year as tax exiles, but after spending three months in Los Angeles we couldn't wait to get back home to England and a bit of reality. That place is the end of the line for any band."

Bad Company didn't witness the New Wave from the safety of a Malibu Beach. They were in this country when the shock-waves broke.

Ralphs says he felt as much excited as threatened but believes that for Bad Company to have changed horses mid-stream would have been dishonest and bogus. They would have alienated their own fans and been publicly ridiculed for jumping on the bandwagon.

"You get to the stage where you know what you can do and, even more important, what you *can't* do. So you have to stick to your guns and try and consolidate what you do best and trust that it's good enough!

"We are Bad Company. . .we play a certain kind of music and, no matter what, we felt we could stand up in our own right.

"We didn't ignore what happened, but we didn't feel we were an integral part of it because we came from a period immediately prior which produced Thin Lizzy and Queen.

"Though we've been around in other bands we're not from the rock legend league of Cream, Hendrix and Zeppelin. We came in between that and what's happened over the last couple of years. And, like Thin Lizzy, we have our own slot.

"I think that what's happened over the last couple of years has been a good kick up the arse for *everyone*. It's only natural that a new generation of kids need their *own* bands. . .their own heroes.

"I want to see a new Who and a new Stones emerge from all this activity. . .bands and musicians who will inspire kids of their own age. That's how it should be. A whole new era of new artists playing rock music the way they want it to be played. Yet I feel that there's as much room for bands like us as there is for Elivs Costello and Ian Dury and whoever else you care to mention. The worst possible thing that could happen would be if everyone liked or was forced to like the same kind of music.

"There are people who would like to see that kind of dictatorship in music — and I'm not just refering to the more extreme New Wavers."

Before changing the subject, Ralph adds a post-script.

"Most bands who survive are those who manage to transcend time and fashion. I mean, who else apart from Bowie survived the Glitter thing? And many of the new bands who attack bands like. . .OK. . .bands like us, have got to realise that in three or four years from now there'll be a whole new bunch of up-and-coming musicians who'll attack *them* as being reactionary. It's up to these new bands who are currently making a name for themselves to build up their own following. That's what it's all about."

THE JACKALS of the New Wave weren't only things snapping at Bad Company's heels. While they took their sabbatical, Atlantic Records — Swan Song's distributor — discovered and (in terms of cash and carry) promoted Foreigner as a poor replacement. To add insult to injury, Foreigner all but cornered the platinum album corner.

"Double Vision" — five million and still selling!

Ralphs is aware of the reasons for Foreigner's success, but not resentful.

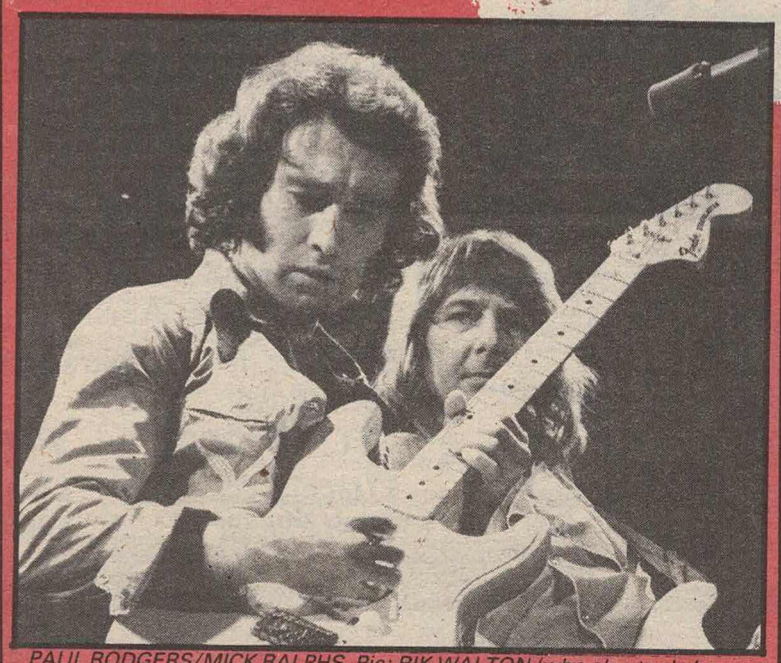
"I don't want to sound condescending, but there are those bands who fill a gap until such a time as the bands they copy return — and it's no big secret that Foreigner filled our gap.

"Basically they did what we should have been doing. . .making records and touring, so good luck to 'em I'm sure they've now built up their very own following. But it would be nice for us to go back and re-establish ourselves where we left off.

"Let's not forget one thing; we were big in America, but we weren't huge."

At this juncture Ralphs offers his

■ *Continues page 52*



PAUL RODGERS/MICK RALPHS. Pic: RIK WALTON (who also took the background shot).

From the country that gave you Boston and Foreigner, a big hand for TOTO — the band with a social conscience . . .

TOTO: "Punk music is a bunch of bullshit."

FRESH FODDER FOR THE DORK MARKET

. . . They wanna help poor folk (a.k.a. Toto) by becoming millionaires in two years. STEVE CLARKE reports.

WITH THEIR first album selling over a million copies in just four months in their native America, Toto haven't had to bide their time for that first sweet taste of success.

Their debut single 'Hold The Line' was also a monster American hit, and it has even briefly penetrated the British singles chart. But then 'Hold The Line', replete with strong hook and powerful rock ensemble playing, is — like the music of Boston and Foreigner — perfect radio rock that makes no demands on the listener.

The six musicians who comprise Toto are all seasoned West Coast session players.

Drummer Jeff Pocaro, an Oriental-looking 24-year-old, is best known over here for his work with Steely Dan, having played both in the studio and on the road with that band. Main songwriter and keyboard player David Paich son of jazz arranger Marty Paich co-wrote and arranged much of Boz Scaggs' hyper-seller 'Silk Degrees'.

Other 'star names' could similarly be linked with the rest of Toto.

Together with vocalist Bobby Kimball, Pocaro and Paich spent several days last week amidst the omniprescent carpeted-luxury of Marble Arch's discreetly swish Montcalm Hotel as part of a European promotional trip.

Cursing CBS for not releasing their album sooner in the UK (it should come out this Friday), Paich and — particularly — Pocaro are not ones to mince words. For instance they don't deny that the potential to become rich and famous was part of the reason for forming Toto 18 months ago.

"I intend to be a millionaire in two years. Honestly," declares Pocaro. As a session musician he's already not done so bad, earning some £75,000 a year. Pocaro also worked on "Silk Degrees", and earned £25,000 to prove it. His contributions took two weeks.

Says Paich: "See, the way the rock field is set up right now — and everybody knows this, I don't care how punk they are — either you don't make a nickel or you make two million dollars and above.

"There's no making half a million dollars. It's just not worth it. It's too much trouble. It's too many headaches for everybody. You either make a lot of money or get out of the business. I would say our chances are no worse than anybody else's, which is the reason we did it."

Sounds like Bob Geldof, eh? Well, not quite. Money wasn't the only ideal behind the formation of Toto. Like, they wanted to have some fun. The life of a top sessioner may be rewarding, but it can become a mite tedious, as Pocaro points out.

"Being a session musician is the life of an airplane pilot. Ninety per cent of the time you're bored, the other ten per cent you're scared to death.

"I decided I was through with sessions the day somebody said, 'I want you to play like the guy on this record here', and it was me that was playing on the record." In future he will only allow himself to become a hired hand for one group — Steely Dan. Or so he says.

To date Toto have played just 25 dates. They plan to play the UK in the autumn. Despite the brevity of their career they've attracted a good deal of hostile press in their native Los Angeles. Writing in *The LA Times,* Robert Hilburn mourned the fact that The Clash weren't selling as many records as Toto who, in his opinion, didn't really deserve to be doing very well at all.

As far as Pocaro is concerned the world would be a better place if the new wave was wiped out overnight. "I think all new wave music and punk music is a bunch of fucking bullshit," he says, becoming heated.

"The music's ugly. The people are ugly. I don't like people using music for political statements."

But Steely Dan make 'political statements' in their songs?

"But they're intelligent ones. I know these kids are poor and it's art their art form, but . . .

"The blacks in the ghettos in the States are starving just as much. They're just as poor. But at least their music tries to make the people happy. It tries to lift the spirits.

"I'm just a purist musician. I don't like them using music. If they want to be a circus act with Barnam and Bailey, then fine, but as for music . . ."

"I don't really give a shit what anybody says about Toto when I look at this piece of paper and see how many records I've sold."

It sounds like it.

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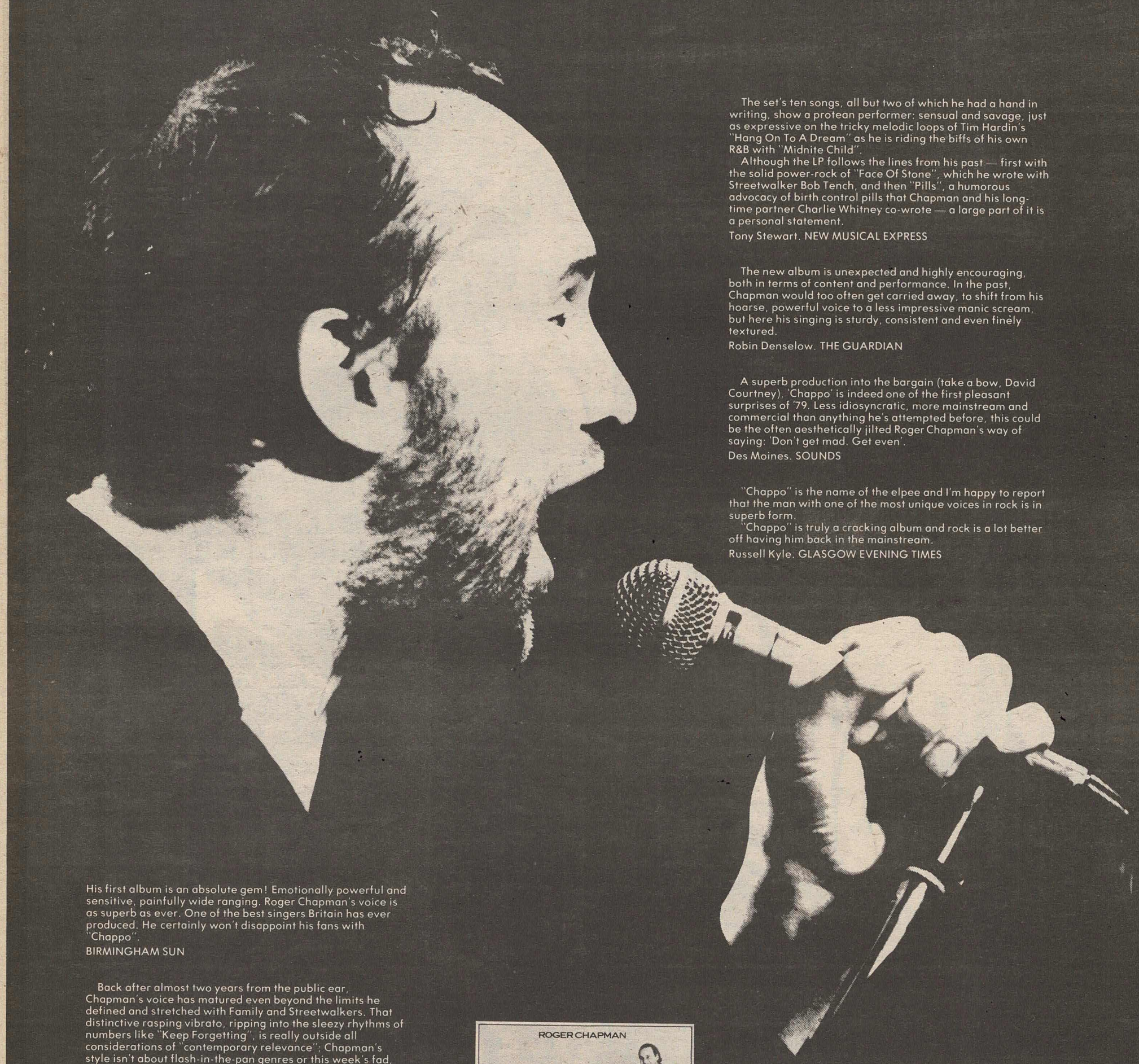
CHAPPO'S BACK!



His first album is an absolute gem! Emotionally powerful and sensitive, painfully wide ranging. Roger Chapman's voice is as superb as ever. One of the best singers Britain has ever produced. He certainly won't disappoint his fans with "Chappo".
BIRMINGHAM SUN

Back after almost two years from the public ear, Chapman's voice has matured even beyond the limits he defined and stretched with Family and Streetwalkers. That distinctive rasping vibrato, ripping into the sleezy rhythms of numbers like "Keep Forgetting", is really outside all considerations of "contemporary relevance"; Chapman's style isn't about flash-in-the-pan genres or this week's fad, it's a feeling for the spirit of rock 'n' roll and rhythm 'n' blues.
Decked out in a red oil-rig boiler suit, Chapman lurched and growled round the stage in absolute command of the night, and the band flowed right behind him, punctuating and accentuating the rollin' and tumblin' set.
Mike Davies. MELODY MAKER

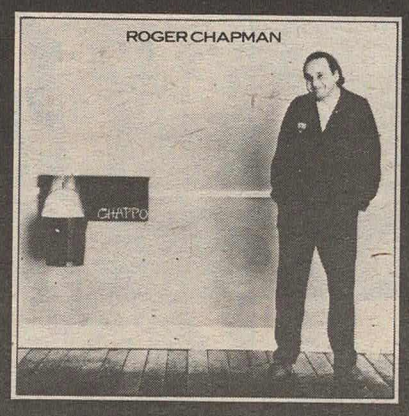
He has not exercised the famous larynx since his "Streetwalkers" partnership with Charlie Whitney broke up two years ago.
Now he's put together a backing band, is on tour, and has recorded an excellent solo album "Chappo".
Anne Nightingale. DAILY EXPRESS

The set's ten songs, all but two of which he had a hand in writing, show a protean performer: sensual and savage, just as expressive on the tricky melodic loops of Tim Hardin's "Hang On To A Dream" as he is riding the biffs of his own R&B with "Midnite Child".
Although the LP follows the lines from his past — first with the solid power-rock of "Face Of Stone", which he wrote with Streetwalker Bob Tench, and then "Pills", a humorous advocacy of birth control pills that Chapman and his long-time partner Charlie Whitney co-wrote — a large part of it is a personal statement.
Tony Stewart. NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

The new album is unexpected and highly encouraging, both in terms of content and performance. In the past, Chapman would too often get carried away, to shift from his hoarse, powerful voice to a less impressive manic scream, but here his singing is sturdy, consistent and even finely textured.
Robin Denselow. THE GUARDIAN

A superb production into the bargain (take a bow, David Courtney), 'Chappo' is indeed one of the first pleasant surprises of '79. Less idiosyncratic, more mainstream and commercial than anything he's attempted before, this could be the often aesthetically jilted Roger Chapman's way of saying: 'Don't get mad. Get even'.
Des Moines. SOUNDS

"Chappo" is the name of the elpee and I'm happy to report that the man with one of the most unique voices in rock is in superb form.
"Chappo" is truly a cracking album and rock is a lot better off having him back in the mainstream.
Russell Kyle. GLASGOW EVENING TIMES



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Angus Gaye (left) and Donald Dee reason with the forces that be.

KINGS OF THE CONCRETE JUNGLE

The Conquering Lions of British Reggae lash their tails and growl at ADRIAN THRILLS.

DONALD "Benjamin" Griffiths, Aswad's tenacious Jamaican-born guitarist, keenly pinpointed the difficulties facing the young white cub journalist on his quest for the definitive in-depth feature on Britain's foremost roots reggae quintet.

"I always know what I'm saying," declares 24-year-old Griffiths as he scans the poster-covered walls of Grove Music's none-too-spacious Harrow Road office.

"But some of what I say is not meant to be clear to you. And if I thought that you would completely understand me, I would probably not say it."

In retrospect their corporate suspicion was unsurprising. Aswad are resolute to a man in their strictly-militant Rastafari-inspired beliefs and, as sure as the Ethiopian grass is green, they consider some of their thoughts exclusive to Jahman alone.

At least Donald does. Later it transpires that at the time of the interview Donald wasn't feeling his normal self and that the rest of Aswad were not entirely in sympathy with his views.

Personally I find such exclusivism — also reflected in their attitude to white audiences (more later) — elitist and cynical, although Donald vehemently denies that the group are in any way black racists.

Nonetheless, it doesn't make them the easiest of interviewees by any stretch of the imagination. At times during our hour-long sit down chat in manager Mikey's Grove office we seemed to be talking at complete cross-purposes.

That certain awkwardness aside — and their more convoluted statements I considered too mazy and tortured for inclusion here — there is still much to praise about Aswad and their music.

Alongside Donald at Grove HQ — and a shade bleary-eyed after spending most of the previous night ensconced in a North London studio putting the finishing touches to their long-awaited second album — are the other four members: bassist George "Ras Levi" Oban, organist Tony "Gad" Robinson, teenage drummer extraordinaire Angus "Drummie Zeb" Gaye and, almost an hour late, singer Brinsley "Dan" Forde, at 25 the oldest member.

Tony is the only non-original — he was recruited from fellow London dreads Brimstone although he had been a close friend of the rest since their genesis. He replaced original organist Courtney Hemmings last year.

Donald apart, they're all London-born and, probably more than most in these dippy days of the lover's rock boom, the five reflect the true roots-level stirring of Black British youth culture.

IN MANY WAYS Aswad were virtually unique from the outset. Coming out of the Willesden, Kensal Rise and Ladbroke Grove areas of north and west London, they played their first gig in November 1975 — coincidentally, the same month as The Sex Pistols made their first, faltering steps onto the London college stage.

Of all places, Aswad's live baptism took place in trendy West Kensington's bastion of pub rock, The Nashville.

The fact that the all-important first gig took place in a boozy rock venue and not the customary black club was prophetic, for Aswad's progress to date has been shaped, to a large extent, along traditional 'rock band' lines.

And whereas the previous decade had seen Bluebeat, Rock Steady and, finally, Reggae groups evolving from long-established Jamaican vocal traditions, Aswad have always been a 'band' in the rock sense.

They have always gigged regularly and extensively, boast two guitarists, Donald and Brinsley, playing rhythm and lead respectively, and write songs that place an unusually strong emphasis on the melody line. It is not fusion music though — a few discernable jazzy tinges aside, the backbeat is strictly a rockers one.

They see a marked difference in their approach to a black audience, on one hand, and a white one on the other. And for sure there *are* differences — there ain't no such t'ing as a White Rasta! — but defining such a rigid dichotomy, with its inbuilt assumption that a white audience can't gain *anything* from the truths and rights of a reggae lyric is again, elitist.

Are Aswad guilty of playing *down* to their white audience?

"In a sense white people like us much more than black people. We feel much more comfortable playing for white people than we do for black . . . not because they don't like us, but because of the way we are musically. That's what a lot of the black people don't like or understand.

"While you might dance to our music, black people will look more to the words than the music.

"But music knows no colour. We're here to play for the world. Still, you have to view Aswad as two different people. Aswad's work is to entertain white people and to open the eyes of black people.

"The black audience do not like our music, but they *accept* it in the same way as the white audience *accept* the words.

"No matter who you are you have to compromise somewhere. Everyman has got a boss — check it that way. As a band we have to please everyone."

Company interest aroused by their early gigs the fledgling fivesome were signed to Island at the beginning of 1976. But British Reggae and record company tribulationseem to go hand in hand — see Matumbi v Trojan! — and true to form Island and Aswad proved far from happy bedfellows.

"When we went to Island they knew nothing of what has exploded now into British Reggae," reflects Brinsley dolefully.

"There was nothing like that then. When we went to Island, they hadn't a clue. All they knew about was getting music from Jamaica and putting it out over here.

"They couldn't relate to us, nor us to them really. They must have just thought we were a bunch of youths who had nothing to offer really. No-one looked any further to see what might happen. No-one really looked into our music.

"Island wanted another Bob Marley type of act that they could send around the world. They weren't interested in Aswad as five men growing up with responsibilities.

"They just didn't understand," claims Donald. "Island wanted to make us rich.

"But that wasn't us. It's not money that we're in this for."

Aswad's Island album — which also featured the vocal and instrumental backing of 'friends' like Bunny and Candy McKenzie, frequent live guests with the group in those days, and Delroy Washington — was on the whole a patchy affair, though one considerably lifted by the inclusion of two bona-fide classic Brinsley Forde originals, "Concrete Slaveship" and "Natural Progression".

"At the time it was recorded it was a great album," recollects Donald. "There was nothing else like that around at the beginning of 1976. I have noticed that what we were doing then is what a lot of other bands are more or less doing now.

"We've since gone on a lot further. But when I listen to the Aswad LP that was recorded then, I still feel proud, to tell you the truth."

The undisputed apex of the band's Island career was, however, "Three Babylon", an epic anti-police single, recorded just before the Notting Hill Carnival in 1976 and engineered by the Mighty Diamonds' producer Karl Pitterson.

"The song just came as an instant vibration," remembers Brinsley. "We'd been to pick up a PA and we were followed back to our rehearsal rooms in our van by a police car. We just started banging on the car seats and singing."

The real watershed in the Aswad history book came at the end of 1977, when they were asked at very short notice to back Burning Spear's Winston Rodney on his British tour. The usual Spear musicians had been unable to make the trip over from Jamaica, and Awad jumped at the chance.

Although they never saw a penny from the tour, they look back fondly on the experience of working with Spear.

"No-one thought Aswad could do that tour at the time," says Donald proudly. "They were all so surprised when they saw us doing it. And we only had three rehearsals with Spear's music beforehand.

"We have always liked Spear from a long time back and we saw it as a little privilege."

"We didn't really play just what Spear had," adds George. "We don't know his songs fully and we're not a Jamaican band — we don't rehearse in Jamaica. We played the songs half as Aswad and half as Spear music. We made people see Aswad as well as Spear."

Brinsley Chaka B Ford reflects on the I.

Winston Rodney was so delighted with the English group's efforts that he personally invited them to record with him and ace Jamaican session trumpeter Bobby "Blazing Horns" Ellis at the end of the tour. The resultant track, "Marcus Children Suffer", taped at Island studios in London, appeared on the recently-released Spear album "Marcus Children".

"We're not really here to discuss Spear," says Donald when pushed further on the Winston Rodney connection.

"But I'll say this much. Spear is a very humble man and if you ever meet him you'll find that the only person he can work with really closely is Bobby Ellis. This doesn't mean that Bobby Ellis gives him all his ideas, but that they work good together."

■ *Continues over page*

Ital Pix: PENNIE SMITH

ASWAD

■ *From previous page*

AFTER THE Spear tour and an unfruitful seven-week sojourn in JA — where the band tried unsuccessfully to record their second album — Aswad finally decided to cut the chord that linked them to Island. They signed almost immediately with black British independent label Grove and last summer issued one of the year's primo singles, the sparkling discomix "It's Not Our Wish".

And, as mentioned earlier, they have during the past few weeks finally finished recording that second LP, nearly a full three years after the first.

Grove have scheduled the album for spring release, by which time Aswad will have completed a 6,000 mile round trip to Kenya and back as part of a cultural exchange arranged by the British Council.

The plan is for them to go out and gig locally with a Kenyan band, with a possible return trip — with an African band supporting Aswad on tour over here — coming later in the year.

Aswad's last major English gig was the Brockwell Park open-air Carnival Against The Nazis with Elvis Costello, Misty and Stiff Little Fingers. I asked Donald — the group's most vocal spokesman as the interview wore on — what Aswad's attitude was to playing under the Rock Against Racism banner and, in particular, to the Punk audience.

"When you check the punk rockers you see they are the English youth fighting against the great singers at the top who make all the money styling their super voices and beautiful sounds.

"But these singers at the top are all weak, while the punk rockers are strong — and they prove this because although a lot of white people don't like punk, they can't stop punk 'cause it's still strong, 'cause the people have the strongest voice."

And the RAR gigs?

"Those gigs are good and they are doing good work. RAR are good in the sense that they are fighting for equal rights . . . for people to be treated fairly.

It's not our wish that we should fight,
For it's our wish to be free.

George Oban and Tony Robinson consider the situation.

"We are here to see that black people get what they deserve. White people have got this country so under control, they have go the system so unique, that everything works out in their favour, and that in turn makes the black man suffer.

"But it is up to the black people to know that they are strong together, wherever they are living in slums and having to accept the worst jobs, like sitting in a factory looking at a biscuit line all day long."

But there are white people suffering too . . .

"Yes, and that is why we have to show that we have got nothing whatsoever against them. They're just people like ourselves.

"That's all we're here for really — to see that black people are treated rightly. Our job is to shout out to the black people, because that's what they relate to . . ."

"The thing is," Brinsley interjects, "that the youth dem already know what it is we're singing about. They know already . . . the songs just face up to that reality. The songs say 'Look, the problem's there. You do what you wanna do — you make the decision'. We're just making the people aware."

But surely, without descending to preaching, you should be able to make a moral judgement of the situation yourself. Why not say what you think is right or wrong?

"I don't think that I should," disagrees Brinsley. "I'll say what I see, but I won't judge it."

"A policeman's way may be wrong," re-inforces the dreadlocked George. "But you can't judge 'im as a man. Seen? Because he's in a system which is doing wrong. I didn't mek a man, so therefore I can't make a judgement. How can you judge a man? That is what is wrong with the system of society.

"Through the political system, you have men out there striking just because of this little political t'ing they want to impose 'pon I and I, their five per cent rise or whatever.

"But there are strikes 'cause people are saying what is right for themselves, what is right for the hours they work.

"What a lot of people don't realise is that I and I don't have to do anything to the system to make it fall . . . just be aware of it and know it. If you don't conform to the system, the system can't stand up.

"Therefore their own system will fall. Dem mash it themselves."

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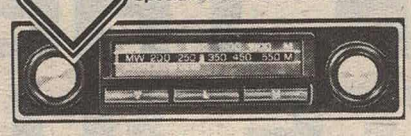

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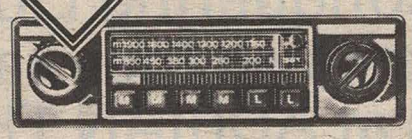

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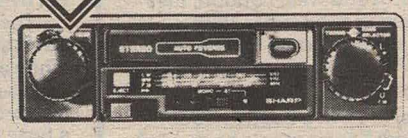

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Virgin

SINGLES

Theoretical Singles For The Adverse Girl (and boy)

SCIENTIFIC FRUITGUM RIPCORD . . .

THEORETICAL GIRLS: U.S. Millie (Theoretical Records). Which goes *ping!* and punches in all the places you like not to be expecting: scratchy attack, and 'art' doesn't come into it. Theoretical Girls are one of the newer New York groups, but — *hold* on! — sound remarkably less pretentious than you might expect; they were scheduled for that recent 'No New York' compilation, but finally rejected — which will probably figure out well for them in the end.

I know, as yet, nothing at all about them — theoretical band, *have* you any girls? — but rest assured, I have spies on your behalf moving this very instant further and further into the Zone . . . 'U.S. Millie' is absurdly 'commercial'. An irresistible 'military' drum figure rolls through, stooping and stuttering, a tinny keyboard going *blittyblittyblatblat,* and a chessy cartoon-character vocal, all conjuring up one of those black and white 'B' movies of the '50s called something like *Archie Green Goes To Harvard* (where he finds true camaradie, the dog of his dreams and crew sox).

It sniggles outside the mould of old structures and scrapes clear a clean, cutting, crackling New Fun slice of nervous noise — to be heard when eating cheesecake, accompanied by cheer leaders and followed by canned laughter. Rhymes *'Scientology'* with *'East Germany'* — why isn't specified. Betty Boop rock.

PUNCTUATED BY WHITE URBAN DRISCO . . .

JAMES WHITE AND THE BLACKS: Contort Yourself/Heatwave (Ze Records 12"). Can nothing numb this new New York tack? This 'White' chap is in fact Jame Chance of Contortions infamy, the Contortions being yet another bouncy NY group — who *were* featured on that 'No' comp. — and they in fact constitute the 'Blacks' here. 'Contort Yourself' is a simple, slick stab at white 'disco' — White disco? — not aping the oeuvre's shiny motions, more utilising its sublime *drive.* Stained, surly and screechy, with rooty-tetchy sax courtesy White, and various venomous scribbles from the Blacks, with a bass you could walk a big dog to.

'(Tropical) Heatwave' — as in Berlin, Irving — is even better. Slinky, spiky, and slippery — the kind of interpretation Bryan Ferry might have managed had he the sense of humour to match the *Ritzy* chip on shoulder. Where Jnr. Walker meets Debbie Harry meets David Murray meets Stackridge meets . . .

LEE PERRY???

LEE PERRY: Bafflin' Smoke Signal (Black Ark). Perry, I tell you, is both very gifted and very *mad,* doing things with the arrangement of sound such as should not logically even be attempted — beware the black hole in the 16-track — approaching creation and production at so many different levels, with such defiant methods: not only harder than the rest, but also sillier, sharper . . .

Shapes and signs in this specific instance point deh to one of Babylon's more despised centres: *"Bafflin' smoke signals in a Vatican city/Bafflin' smoke signals in the city of in-i-quity . . ."* Text and texture fade and curl, faint and crash, in and up away, indistinguishable: a magnetic mirage dub, heavy cymbalic heatwave music, guaranteed to push up the thermostat and pull down the walls of . . .

"There is nothing new under the sun/So how come you give us a new pope? He didn't even have a name/But you called him just the same/He couldn't have a new name/Rastafari is the new name."

Don't go to Rome for your summer holiday seems to be the main thing here.

ITAL PRIZE FOR PRODUCTION

SLIM SMITH: Lonely Lover (Studio One).
RANKING MICHIGAN & GENERAL SMILIE: Rub A Dub Style (Studio One). Two indispensable releases from C.S. Dodd's immortal Studio One label. I think that it would not be overstating its case to say that 'Lonely Lover' by the late Slim Smith is quite the *loveliest* single I've heard for a good time, and that the last three or four of this particular lonely lover's weeks would have been less than bearable without it. What finishes me off every time is the aching break in Slim's voice during his final rendition of the *"Won't somebody help me, won't somebody have mercy on me?"* plea. A record which makes suffering seem seductive. How sweet it is . . .

'Rub A Dub Style', on the other hand, is more likely to encourage mirth than melancholy. Only a slightly less lovely piece of production than its stablemate, it features a similarly sweet denouement in the final exchange of responses between the two public speakers: *"Go deh Michie, go deh!/Go weh?/In deh, Michie, in deh!/In weh?/In a da rub a dub style, Smilie!"* The only 'talkover' I've personally been able to take for *quite* a time. And both records feature predictably fine treble-hi dubs: Studio One style, in 1979!

TOKEN ETHNO—MUSICOLOGY

LIGHT OF SABA: Lambs Bread Collie (Light of Saba).
MICHAEL SMITH & LIGHT OF SABA: Roots (Light Of Saba). *'Universal Will Power'.* Difficult to write about this music; its deep, underground roots are not for me to disentangle. Light of Saba are a Rasta collective whose roots, religion and rockers do not divide; not straight-forward 'reggae', more heavily African — as though that wasn't the music's essential nature anyway — and jazzy than 'usual'. 'Collie' is a simple 7" version, humid, widely paced, thick and moving. 'Roots' is a four-track 12" featuring Michael Smith, a twisted vein, shame and slander 'dub lyricist' in the Kwesi Johnson manner. Undiluted.

VAULTING AMBITION O'ERLEAPS . . .

THE POP GROUP: (She Is) Beyond Good And Evil (Radar). The Pop Group's first single is 12" pressed, artishly sleeved, and Denis Bovelle produced: the idea is that they should *take their place.* A speed-jag intro into this shooting jazz-dub frame of jigsaw-into-pieces guitar, plum-pushing 'disco' bass line, and clever mix. But . . . *"My little girl was born on a ray of sound/Sleeps on water walks on ice/Got'no father/Immortal wife . . . Western values mean nothing to her/She's the girl of my dreams"* . . . as we in the social context are fond of saying, 'technique' only has meaning in relation to 'ends'. Ending here, it seems, in fantasy which provides a 'magical' resolution to problems of sexuality.

The Pop Group dream of a stereotyped femininity, an idealized counterpart: a fantasy of passivity where a woman's 'presence' is transcendental, beyond confrontation and the stress of self-assertion. Not beyond adolescent insecurity or what?

CITY REFLEXES & SWEATY SOX

THE JAM: Strange Town (Polydor). Paul Weller using the same old architecture to little effect. Those stainless curves, designs, supports, angles and spots. All that sharp form and structure he's learnt to love and loved to learn: the art(ifice) of the archivist. 'Strange Town' is plain and hook-less, sounding largely derived from The Clash's 'City Of The Dead', whilst 'The Butterfly Collector' is positively antique. Weller continues to make records for some theoretical *Juke Box Jury,* awkwardly autobiographical — I'm off for some chips and the bloke next door is playing Pink Floyd again — and wrapped up in that affected *Liverpool Poets* angsty-pasty kind of 'Number Nine Bus & Fag Packet' social 'realism'. Two steps back, as Lenin once said . . .

FEAR OF FUN-ISM

CHIC: I Want Your Love (Atlantic)
SISTER SLEDGE; He's The Greatest Dancer (Atlantic). That proverbial ol' Brill Building sticks more bricks in your ear courtesy 'The CHIC Organisation', who are responsible for both these records. Sounds sinister to me. The bureaucracy of enjoyment, a fantastic spatio-temporal idioverse of constant fulfillment, where the book of love is full of logarithms and rhythm is entered in a logbook.

'He had the kind of body that would shame Adonis," chirp the Sledge sisters, going on to proclaim the lad's specificity as a *"champion of dance"* who *"never leaves the disco floor alone,"* concluding that *"as a man he's complete."* As a complete weed I'm a bit put out, I must say. Chic, on the other hand, admit to activity outside the disco drill and claim monogamous deprivation. Despite the standard 'CHIC Organisation' inoculations against boredom and general bad vibes, they would seem to be squeezing their collective pillow at night for want of the aforementioned love. I daresay this will touch a sparkler in the collective unconscious — otherwise known as Radio One — and the 'CHIC Organisation' will move a coupla grand nearer taking over the Zone completely: you don't need the Rocket when you got the Riff . . .

FOR CRYING OUT LOUD TO

PATRIK FITZGERALD: All Sewn Up (Polydor).
MARK BEER: Isolations (Waste). An on-going inward-looking Simon and Garfunkel deja-vu situation, here. Fitzgerald's solipsistic little-everyman-lost dogma gets more annoying with every appearance, displaying all the dumb characteristics of that utterly naive 'school' of 'social thought' which delights in soaking its smalls in the 'politics' of the trivial: wet, lukewarm, and bubbly. 'All Sewn Up' is predictable kitchen sink polemic ajax, about 'being someone' and the like, whilst 'Hammersmith Odeons' points at the problem in hand without ever hinting at stating the 'point'.

Mark Beer — no jokes about him having enough bottle — has made his own four-track EP which we all might like to classify 'interesting' — dumb classification, huh? — were it not largely composed of 'pleasant enough' 'cliches'. 'Other Doubts' is the, er, most 'something or other' track, placing itself firmly atop tradition with a capital Alan Hull, Kevin Coyne, John Martyn, and Howard Devoto. Etc . . . The future of hammy humanist rock'n'roll? Er, no.

THIS HYPE

SPARKS: The Number One Song In Heaven (Virgin). Remember Sparks . . . 'This Town Ain't Big Enough', for instance, was a good little noise, to be heard submerged in one's bathwater, cued by

■ *Continues over page*

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SINGLES CONTINUED

■ *From previous page*

Alan Freeman and followed by *Sing Something Simple*. (Disposable).

This 'Number One', from album of similar appendage, is 12" pressed, artishly sleeved, and Giorgio Moroder produced: the idea is that they should *come back*. Modern as magnetism. Repurchase Sparks . . . 'Number One' is a good little noise, to be heard with one's head in a hairdryer, filmed by a director with preposterous pretentions toward Bunuel and followed by a symposium on 'The Cliches Of Futurism'. (Unavoidable?)

From gleeful mannerism . . .

HYPE THIS

BEACH BOYS: Here Comes The Night (Caribou). . . . to godawful mediocrity. Desperate dyed 'drisco' from the formally sand-blown brotherhood. Twenty minutes of it: left my hi-hat in San Antonio: surfer so dada. That it should come to this. Whatever 'it' is . . .

PARAMETERS OF GLOBAL PARTY-ISM

G.Q.: Disco Nights (Rock Freak) (Arista). 'RUSH RELEASED!' here, having sold quarter of a million copies in one afternoon in Baltimore in *one department store alone*, or something equally unlikely. Could be the CIA.

INTO THE EROGENOUS ZONE

ALICIA BRIDGES: Body Heat (Polydor).
STARGAARD: Sensuous Woman (MCA).
CHAKA KHAN: Life Is A Dance (Warner Bros). . . . remembers what his mother told him — never dance with loose women, because at the end of the night they'll just fall apart on you. Between 'Bridges' and 'Body Heat' there's a great pun about burning your behind, but anyway . . . This is nowhere near 'Nightlife', being a drisco-rock cross-over which doesn't. Awful guitar. Stargaard, on the other hand, are into astrology. 'Sensuous Woman' is nowhere near 'Which Way Is Up' — and between these two is a great pun about Come In, Your Which Way Is Up . . .

. . . remembers that Rufus' 'Tell Me Something Good' was one of the first soul singles he ever bought. Now Chaka Khan yelps about 'life' being a 'dance' — no hint though as to whether it might be the khan khan.

INTO THE ERRONEOUS ZONE

FISH TURNED HUMAN: Turkeys In China (Sequel).
DIE ELECTRIC EELS: Tisch (Rough Trade).
FILE UNDER POP: Heathrow (Rough Trade).

Who are into The Soft Boys, Fauvism, and the Aestheticization of Industry respectively. Standard sixth form surrealism, fauvism, and aestheticization of industry respectively. Too soft, too jagged, and middle-of-the-rails respectively. Three out of ten apiece for independence, period.

AGE-ISM RULES, DADDY—O

ROGER CHAPMAN: Midnite Child (Arista).
FRANKIE MILLER: Good To See You (Chrysalis). 'Midnite Child' sounds to be the water-closet in Chapman's career, all hackneyed hand-me-down vamp and hump, no joy, no journey, just 'Chappo' looking teddybear-ish in a red boilersuit. Frankie Miller, on the other hand, remembers Rod Stewart's part in that BBC documentary about the navy and sails off on his own little closing-time shanty, the dead salty dog lying on the deck putting him off not a jot. Rum, anyone?

LIVER BANDS

THE TEARDROP EXPLODES: Sleeping Gas (Zoo).
THOSE NAUGHTY LUMPS: Iggy Pop's Jacket (Zoo). Two from the Zoo. The Teardrop Explodes are a four-piece, and suggest artishness — which usually means foolishness — and at the moment they chug along pleasantly aping Wire without too much of that crew's pretence or angst. Those Naughty Lumps on the other hand . . . A Big In Japan type t'ing (unspecified numbers) without too much of that crew's gallant sense of the absurd.

BELFAST BANDS

RUDI / SPIDER / OUTCASTS / IDIOTS: The Battle of The Bands (Good Vibrations). Seems and sounds like dumb centralisation and premature presentation. All four stuck firmly atop '76's bonfire, with little 'commitment' in any quarter to either style or subject matter.

PAPIER MACHO

THE POLICE: Roxanne (A&M).
SQUEEZE: Cool For Cats (A&M).
AFTER THE FIRE: One Rule For You (CBS).
NEON: Don't Eat Bricks (Radar). 'Roxanne' is dumb macho-with-heart-of-gold romanticism, the kind of offensive 'white reggae' played by people who've obviously only ever heard a couple of 'reggae' records, is more than a year old and has been inexplicably re-released on 12", probably to tie in with some 'American success' — itself probably down more to misplaced Yankee images of Jack Warner than anything. Squeeze, on the other hand, put out a silly-bugger little noise, to be heard on *Crackerjack*, cued by Ed Stewpot and followed by mopping up: obvious structure, obvious sexism, obvious opportunism.

After The Fire we are normally left with an insubstantial, flittery, unpleasant compound, weak and useless, merely existing . . . Whereas Neon is loud, unpleasantly 'modern', and a waste of good natural resources. (After The Fire are 'sensitive', Neon are a cementmixer.)

PAPIER REGGAE

PRINCE FAR I: Love By Every One (Cry Tuff). A scraping noise not unlike Lee Marvin attempting a talkover. I was born under a wandering black star liner?

PAPIER MACHEE

TANYA TUCKER: Lover Goodbye (MCA). Tanya Tucker, 19, from Arizona, later from Las Vegas, into horses, saving the baby seals, and tight leather trousers — the handmike lead held taut between the legs: the idea is that she should *grow up*. 'Lover Goodbye' is cross-over-country — steel strings and synthi-drums. Perverse and poppy. No, make that pornographic.

PAPIER MONEY

CHUCK MANGIONE: Bellavia (A&M). Ol' Chuck crosses over pop, soul, funk, jazz, MOR, soundtrack and muzak in one sweet swoop. It'll 'go' gold. Talk about *penetrating* the Zone — Chuck probably *owns* the damn place by now.

DOO PAP?

ROCKY SHARPE & THE RAZORS: Imagination (Chiswick). Never did like barbershops.

THE PAP

WALDORF TRAVERS: Big Time American Girl (United Artists). The cowboy leaves the brassy blonde at the pinball, the nickel leaves his fingers, enters the slot in the jukebox, the brassy blonde pulls languidly at the pinball, the cafe owner swats lazily at a fly, the cowboy cocks his hat back and stares round slowly at the fat cop who's just slouched in to bust him for dope possession. HA! HA! (What a good song that would've made, eh Waldorf?)

KOFI & KIKI: 24 Hours In A Disco (Bronze). Starring Mickey Rooney as The Palm Tree Who Makes It Through To The End.

MENACE: I Need Nothing (Illegal). Recorded June 1977 and Starring John Cale as The Producer Who Makes It Through To The End, Just.

PIECES OF TWELVE

SONNY TOMM COMBO: Chinatown (Tempus).
GUARDIAN ANGEL: China Gate (M.R.).
LINVAL THOMPSON & TRINITY: I Never Run I Never Hide (Greensleeves).

'Chinatown' is one of three 'Ska' 12"s by this Sonny Tomm Combo put out by Tempus: nice move. 'Chinatown' is the hardest, although spoilt a tad by some guitarist who chooses to break in as though it was 1968 and a Fleetwood Mac recording session. (Maybe it *is* Peter Green . . .)

'China Gate' is a subtly strange meeting of 'Lovers rock' and the Orient, somewhere east of Greek St, and well produced by Bagga and Fergus of Matumbi, although spoilt a tad on the dub by a harmonica player who chooses to break in as though . . . 'I Never Run I Never Hide' is a duller than dull affair, with nobody breaking in or out at any point: disregard.

The Ghost of Slim Smith comes to haunt the Singles pages

The Day The World Turned Dalgleish

ADRIAN THRILLS goes close with the old one-two (three-four) in a close match in Bristol

RICHARD JOBSON hasn't had a shave in days and it shows. Beneath an unruly mop of curly hair and the miniature ivory tusk earring that dangles from his left lughole, his craggy Celtic features are glazed by the growth of hard ginger stubble.

Jobson is 18 but looks and sounds much older. In his time he has been a Scottish schoolboy international centre-forward, an amateur boxer and the production controller in a Dunfermline factory.

For the past two years or so, however, the passion in his life — and when I say passion, I mean Passion with a capital Pee — has been The Skids.

Jobson is the animated singer, occasional rhythm guitarist and chief lyric writer in the band of Scots, which is why he sits opposite me in a Bristol eaterie, having just demolished half a bottle of white wine single-handed in as many minutes.

Given the present state of play, one would reasonably have expected The Skids to be as happy as a dog in a ditch — money in their pockets, a single in the Top 20 and still rising, a major tour 'on the road', debut album in the shops ... but they just can't get no love. Or so Richard Jobson reckons.

"Yae even had a dig at us in yae crossword," he spouts, jabbing angrily at the cafe tablecloth with his fork.

For the cause of the lad's wrath, look back no further than the review section of the world's most discerning rock paper last week, where John Hamblett and Mark Ellen in turn brandished their critical sledgehammers on The Skids' debut album and live show.

"Yae ignore us for a year and then — Wham! Yae didna even get the name of the album right! Aiiiiieeeee!!"

Ouch! The fork digs sharply into the lace tablecloth once more.

Just as I'm beginning to contemplate hopping onto the first available Inter City 125 train from Bristol station back to London before the going gets really tough, Jobson's leonine visage cracks into a wry smile. As he grins, it displays his bottom row of teeth, complete with the odd gummy gap or two brought upon by his violent kick-or-be-kicked-around pit-town upbringing.

He seems to sense just what is going through my mind — the fact that these here Skids have just got to be The Most Paranoid Band In The Land — and grins again.

"I hate criticism," goes the broad Scottish accent. "I even hate it when people stand and abuse a band onstage.

"I don't know why it is, but I just naturally hate it. It's probably 'cos most of the people criticising yae dannae even ken what you're about.

"We've always had faith in ourselves. We got really disillusioned at one stage, but that was mainly 'cos our faith in ourselves wasnae being backed up by our record company. But we've always had faith as a band."

THERE ARE two ways for a working class kid to escape the predestined nine to five treadmill and the general humdrum existence that goes with it — Rock Music and Professional Sport — or so runs a popular train of thought.

Ricky Jobson is in the rather unique position of having tried both. He formed The Skids mid-1977 with guitarist Stuart Adamson when an initially promising soccer career looked to be heading the way of so many good junior apprentice footballers who fail to make the grade and end up on the scrapheap with No Future before they reach the age of 20, as sorry a sight as yesterday's failed pop stars.

But Alternative Escape Route No. 2 — The Skids — was slightly more than just the last resort for a Kenny Dalglish that never made it.

They were born out of frustration at the strictly stodgy HM-dominated West Scotland band scene of the time, where pomp-rockers Nazareth were the beloved local boys made good. Their main inspiration, naturally enough, was the burgeoning London / Manchester real rock renaissance.

"Apart from Mott The Hoople and Gary Glitter, I hadn't really been particularly into rock music before then," recalls Jobson.

"We were attracted to the London thing — at first I just got into it because of the image. I was heavily into the Billy Idol trip, all glamorous with fancy clothes, bleached blond hair in a DA and everything. But I soon dispensed with all that.

"When the band formed, I was still playing as an apprentice footballer with this Scottish club who were linked with Aston Villa. At the time I'd done all sorts of ridiculous things with my hair and yae cannae play fitba in Scotland like that!

"I was like a wee centre forward playing against all these big centre halves. Now, they'll dig yae up whatever yae look like, but when you're playing against them with bleached blond hair then you're really in for a hard time, y'ken?"

For their first public performance in Dunfermline, Jobson and Adamson enlisted the talents of drummer Tom Kellichan and bassist Willie Simpson — a line-up

■ *Continues over*

SKIDS put the pointy-boot in (l-r): Willie Simpson, Tom Kellichan, Richard Jobson, Stuart Adamson.

Pic: MIKE LAYE

SKIDS

■ *From previous page*

that has remained unchanged since.

Adamson, more thoughtful and introverted offstage than the ever-irrepressible Jobson, had been holding down a factory job before he took up the guitar, while Kellichan and Simpson had earned their crusts as lorry driver and tree inspector (!) respectively.

None actually hail from Dunfermline, but the surrounding pit villages — a background reflected in Jobson's inner drive and hard-bitten lyricism.

"We've still got that natural aggression in us. It's so different up there to down in London. As a kid in Scotland, you've always got to fend for yourself, always got to impress the older generation, the generation above you — show them how tough you are.

"You harden yourself through the ages. It's a hard place to be brought up, but it's a good way to be brought up — though it is harder to get out of the old run-of-the-mill rut than it might be down south. It's harder to get away from the nine to five, with the semi and the kids in the garden and the Ford Escort in the drive.

"But I've always been looking for that alternative.

"And when we played that first gig, it was just brilliant to go out on the stage and see all the guys yae ken in the audience and say, 'Look at what I'm doing now and look at yourselves'."

Guitarist Adamson, perhaps more aware of the contradictions of his chosen rock lifestyle, sees things slightly differently.

"Playing in this band and having hit singles in particular always inspires terrible feelings of guilt in me for some obscure reason. Like, it's just that I cannae see why I should deserve anything special any more than the next man."

And it is Adamson — as much the true heart and soul of The Skids as Ricky Jobson — who gives the group their distinctive sound. In the two years that they have been playing, he has forged a refreshingly original approach to his instrument, relying largely on the principles of — wait for it — bagpipe music. Basically, one string of the guitar is left permanently open to give a bagpipe-like drone sound while the melody is picked out on another single string. Scotsman, know your culture.

"Musically, we have always been that little bit different to the London bands," elaborates Jobson.

"The London bands always had pretty close contact with each other, but we never had anyone. We got a bit of help early on from The Rezillos, but we were virtually on our own from the start.

"That was the biggest thing about coming from Dunfermline. We were alienated from the London bands.

"The thing that was inspiring most about the London bands to us was just the image and the attitude.

"I'd agree that the musical differences are mainly down to Stuart's guitar playing. There's no way that he's just picked up the guitar and thrashed away — he's actually thought about what he's playing.

"It's not anything new in the way of the avant garde bands like The Pop Group, who are supposedly doing something new. It's just his own technique."

THE LION'S share of The Skids' songs are built around Adamson's prickly riffs — the guitarist himself being the band's chief music-writer — underpinned by the solid, voluble chassis of the Simpson / Kellichan rhythm section, an ideal counterpart to Adamson's quirky style.

At their most impressive — 'Charles', 'Of One Skin', 'Hope And Glory' and 'Scared To Dance', the title track of the album — they come across as a more abrasive, venomous Magazine or maybe even The Gang Of Four minus a few of the appealing irregular edges.

If only they could resist an ill-advised tendency to over-arrange their stuff in the studio — as on the clumsy 'Dossier Of Fallibility' (for Don Revie?) and the fussy, jerky 'Six Times' — they would truly emerge as a band to be reckoned with.

And if only Jobson could learn to control and refine the occasionally over-reaching verbal pyrotechnics of his lyrics ... all they need really is time.

As it is, most of their records — successful as they've been — have yet to capture the blistering peaks of their stage set.

Indeed, a disagreement during recording the album with their producer, one-time Sensational Alex Harvey Band vocalist Dave Batchelor, led to Adamson walking out on the band in protest just after Christmas. He only returned to the fold after much persuasion.

"We get on alright with Dave and he's great as a person, but I didna like a lot of his ideas about how the songs should be embellished, overdubs and things like that."

The guitarist even goes as far as claiming that his all-time favourite Skids record sound-wise is still their first single 'Charles', rough and ready, stripped and sparse, recorded at the end of 1977 for Scottish-based independent label No Bad. It sounds nothing like the band that are heard on the album.

"Charles' — which appears in altered form on 'Scared To Dance' — is itself a wonderful little song about a fictional character who finds work in a metal-drilling factory and becomes so obsessed with the job that he becomes grafted onto the machine, eventually being declared obsolete by the factory boss and sold off as scrap. There's a parable there somewhere.

It was the original 'Charles' EP on No Bad that brought the band to the attention of the Virgin Records A&R department early last year.

But now — one year into their eight-album deal with the company — The Skids find themselves decidedly unhappy with the set-up. They articulate their grievances with frank, disarming honesty.

"Because we were in the position of owing money to No Bad at the time for the 'Charles' EP, we couldn't hold out to get a better deal from Virgin."

"We're bankrupt at the moment and we're still being subsidised by these guys (No Bad) in Scotland.

"At the time of signing the contract we were just so naive. We didnae understand anything. We were just young country yokels to them."

"But," adds Adamson, "it's our fault more than theirs. It was our naivety. There's no use in getting catty about it now."

Says Jobson: "Last year, we did a whole tour without any promotional assistance from them in the slighest. On some gigs we were playing to 30 people!

"Since there's been a small degree of success, they've begun treating us a bit better, but they should have had faith in us right from the start."

ON ONE POINT of packaging, however, The Skids displayed admirable bottle; gimmick-kings Virgin wanted the 'Scared To Dance' LP pressed in unit-shifting (so they believe) blue vinyl. But the Skids had THE NERVE TO SAY NO, and the album is to stand or fall on the merits of the music alone.

"They had already pressed up so many copies in blue vinyl before we even got to hear of it," recalls Tom.

"And we'd told them beforehand exactly what way we wanted it pressed — and they went and did *that!* It was the same with 'Into The Valley' — we didn't know that it was going to be in white vinyl until we got the actual single.

"So we went down to them and said simply that we wouldn't promote the album on tour unless it was pressed as we wanted it."

The Skids album was released last Friday in glorious black vinyl. The title track, incidentally, was inspired by an article in these very pages by Tony Parsons on chart popsters Smokie on tour behind the Iron Curtain in Poland.

THAT SAME afternoon (Friday), The Skids visited the Bristol branch of their record company's retail shop chain for one of those meet - the - record - buying - fans - the - day - before - the - night - of - the - gig sessions.

Such personal appearances are always a good way of ensuring a full house for the evening's gig, but if that was the sole reason for this shop visit, then The Skids needn't have bothered: the hall that night was packed to overflowing and sweatier than a wrestler's armpit.

It is the annual students' union rag ball at the city's university and The Skids are playing with Lene Lovich and close on two dozen other lesser lights — four gigs running simultaneously under the one roof.

The Skids' set treads that thin line between a wildly raucous good time and complete chaos, but always keeps just the right side of the razor-edge, despite the barrage of gleefully possessed human debris that piles up at the front of the stage.

There is only one black spot. During the fourth or fifth number, a pimply, stringy-haired student — obviously loving his role for the night of over-efficient official bouncer — starts laying mercilessly into a kid half his size whose only crime seems to be that he is enjoying himself.

Without hesitation, halfway through the song, the beefy Jobson launches himself into the affray and in seconds is sorting the guy out.

"Live, we're a naturally aggressive band," Jobson is to tell me later, "but I don't encourage violence."

"In the early days of the band I was well into it. It was incredible in those days — a bit like a Scottish version of the Shams. There was trouble at just about every gig, y'ken?

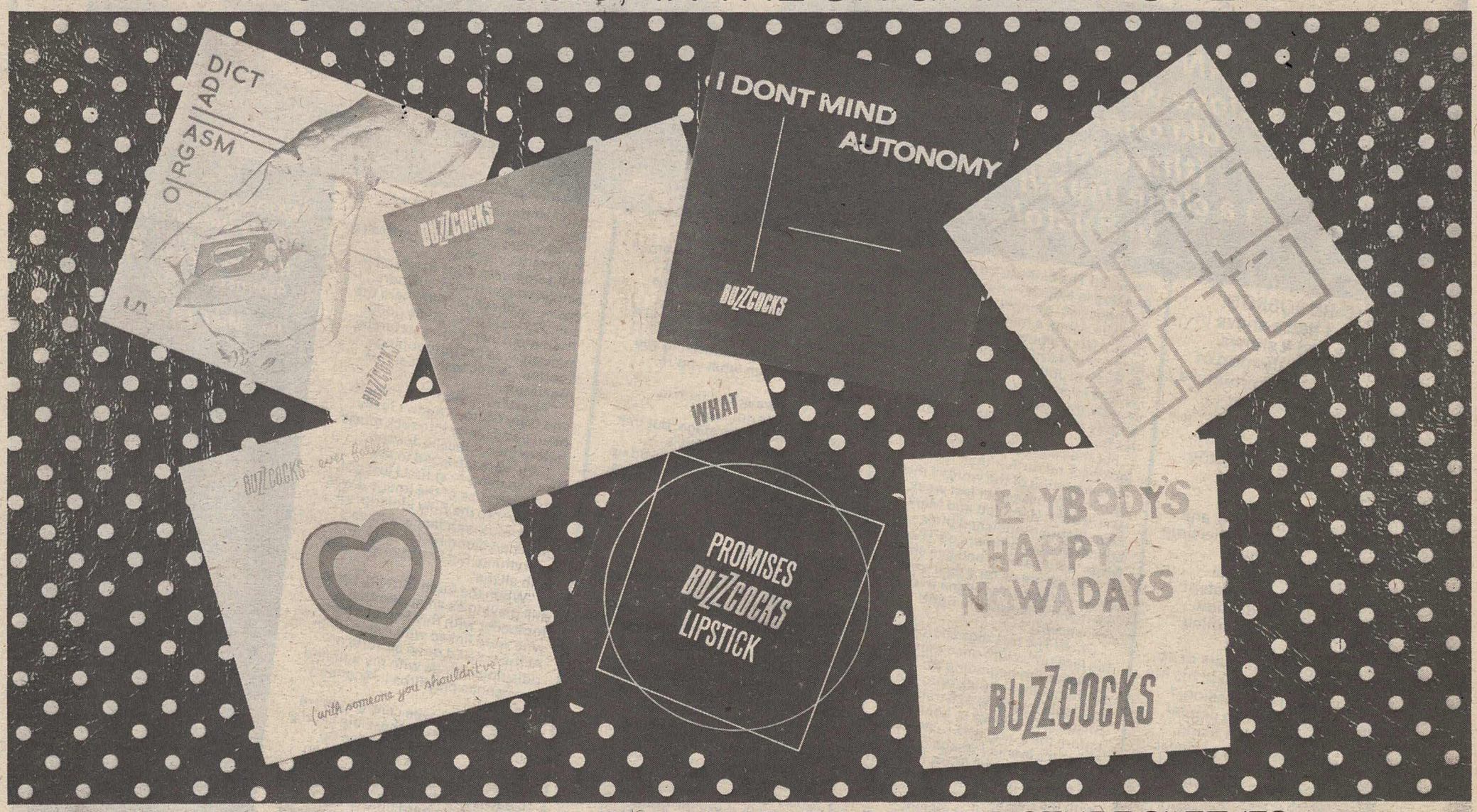
"But my biggest lesson came not long ago when I got involved with some guys way above my level. These two hired guys came around my flat, broke the door down and put my mate's head through the window.

"I just couldn't handle that. Those guys were animals. Some people say that I've encouraged violence at our gigs, but I haven't. I'm disgusted by it."

Take it from me: The Skids, to re-paraphrase a cliche, are more than alright. They really are.

Y'ken?

ANOTHER MUSIC, IN THE ORIGINAL KITCHEN



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WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SCOWLI

Anger and Confrontation on the road in Ireland. The VAN MORRISON interview. By TONY STEWART

THE DUBLIN HOTEL room was still in the early hours of the morning as two of the film crew began to dismantle their equipment. The excitement of the interview had passed; the tension, awkwardness, anger and conflict between Van Morrison and the music writer had been committed to celluloid and tape. Now only a backwash of depression remained.

Morrison's press agent, Keith Altham, and photographer Pennie Smith could appreciate the writer's unease and they quietly waited for him to speak. Stewart jerked a cigarette from its packet, lit it with shaking hands, then threw the packet hard across the coffee table. He grimaced at the others.

Ninety minutes with Morrison had been unpleasant and difficult. The singer had never relaxed and there had been no warmth to their conversation. Most of it had been filmed, which had unnerved and inhibited Stewart. Morrison had attacked, told him his questions were boring, irrelevant, and then angrily babbled on and on about the press and his own wish *never* to give interviews.

Trying to retain his own dignity throughout the fierce invective, the writer eventually had to concede defeat. He'd looked dejectedly at Morrison and admitted, "I can't go any further with the interview."

"Great," said the artist flatly. "That's it. Let's just wrap it up then."

Stewart had smiled politely. "But thanks for doing it anyway."

"'Kay. Thank *you*," Morrison replied. A short, stocky man he'd abruptly got out of his chair, shook the writer's hand firmly and quickly walked towards the door.

"There are still one or two people downstairs, Van," Altham had told him meekly. But without even pausing Morrison mumbled something and walked straight out of the room, his expression stony.

Now the strained silence was oppressive.

"And you should have been here when he was talking about *you*," Stewart said to the press agent, forcing a weak, hollow laugh. Altham giggled quietly. Pennie smiled sympathetically and rolled back her eyes.

"What did he say about me?" The PR probed cautiously.

"About employing the best press agent in . . ."

"Oh, I was 'ere for that one."

"No, the first time . . . and they're still fuckin' queuing up at the door!" Stewart added, paraphrasing Morrison's comments about his dislike and distrust of all journalists. He had felt like a leper.

"What, to do interviews?" Altham pressed. "It's funny, isn't it? I mean, as he said, last night he was sort of chattering away . . ."

But that had been after the Belfast concert when a freelance journalist called John Tobler had left the post-gig reception to talk to Morrison. A renowned Van fan almost to the point of sycophancy, Tobler had afterwards boasted of the *very special* rapport they'd established.

"He used *me* tonight to get over *his* point," Stewart continued, unable to suppress his annoyance. "And I was *set-up!*" He indicated the film equipment and crew.

"I don't know," Altham protested doubtfully. "I went out for the last 15, 20 minutes; it obviously went on exactly the same way, did it? I thought if I left the room it might level itself out. But it didn't? 'Why I don't want to do interviews' was the topic of conversation?"

Stewart nodded. Shuffling uneasily on his feet, he was exasperated.

He *thought* he'd asked the right questions of Morrison — a notoriously 'impossible interview' anyway — and was frustrated by the lack of response. An image of the artist was in the writer's mind: sullenly slumped in an armchair, acting a role purely for the film which was being made of his Irish tour.

"I asked about the songs, which I thought were intelligent questions," he justified, talking quickly and glancing at the other two for some kind of reassurance. "I asked about the lyrics. When he argued about that, I asked about the music structures, the influence on 'Venice USA'. To me, all pertinent questions. Obviously Van doesn't like doing interviews — *as he said.*"

"He just hasn't anything to say that counts," Pennie said.

"I don't know," Altham again argued. "When he was talking to Tobler he was all right. I think it was just the frame of mind, possibly, that he was in tonight.

"I thought that following that gig, which I knew he was unhappy about, I would find out what sort of mood he was in, right? How things were going to go. So I chatted to him downstairs, as you saw, and I thought he was in quite a receptive frame of mind to talk.

"As I said to Alex (King, VM's tourmanager), if he doesn't want to talk there is no way we should push him into a corner; nothing would emerge from it."

Stewart shrugged, squashed the cigarette butt hard into an ashtray and shoved his cassette recorder into his bag. He was still tense and could feel his legs trembling. He needed a stiff drink and with the other two went down to the hotel lounge.

Outside in the corridor, Morrison's girlfriend Brenda was leaning against the wall talking quietly and urgently to the freelance film director Mike Radford, a tall, eager and earnest young man. Still indignant that he'd been cast in the film as a monkey to Morrison's painful organ grinding, Stewart ignored them both.

"I was expecting you to have a go at Van," Altham said as they walked down the dark staircase. "Towards the end I thought you were going to get up and walk out or even *hit him!* I was amazed by your tenacity," he chuckled.

"What would've been the point?" The writer replied gloomily. "So he doesn't like doing interviews. I respect that; I even agree with him. It was just sitting there, the cameras rolling, thinking I'd been fuckin' well set-up."

In the lounge he ordered a large brandy and Guinness and drank them quickly. Their warmth helped dissipate his anxiety. Radford joined them, gushing gratitude that Stewart had allowed them to film the interview. Although he'd spent several days with Morrison and granted him absolute control of the film, he'd been unable to get him to talk about his music or himself.

As far as the writer was concerned, there'd been no choice in the matter.

After the show at Dublin's National Stadium, Altham had told him of the plan to film the interview, but he'd refused. When they went to a room in the Shelbourne where coffee and sandwiches were laid on for the tour party, he had been surprised that the arrangements were still going ahead.

Standing by a long trestle table covered with a white linen cloth, Morrison had looked forward to the prospect.

"You can make it real formal," he excitedly told Altham. "Just walk in and say, Excuse me but the *NME* would like to do an interview." He'd then started laughing, a throaty clucking which brought tears to his eyes.

Meanwhile, Brenda — a tall, shapely, fair-haired American — had slipped away with Radford to look for a suitable setting in the hotel. Nobody bothered to consult the writer until he'd bumped into the director on his way to the toilet.

"Is it all right with you to film it?" Radford has asked, probably more out of courtesy.

"Well, it seems like a *fait accompli* anyway. I just hope you don't intend to interupt the interview every five minutes."

"No, no," Radford had replied, hurrying off. "We shoot from the hip."

Over the next two hours Stewart's original foreboding had been confirmed; sensing the writer's dark mood in the lounge, Radford tried to placate him. "I just think Morrison is *terrified, absolutely terrified* of revealing too much about himself."

"Actually," the writer said as the confused aftermath of the turbulent confrontation evaporated and the highlights emerged, "I think he revealed more about himself than he thinks."

He remembered flashes . . .

"I'm in the music business. I'm not gonna sit up on a hill somewhere writing songs . . . I'm fuckin' grown up now . . ."

"I don't get my pleasure from my gig . . . I'm doing a job basically . . ."

"But there's really no point in going through everything . . . to be fuckin' used by some guy who's getting drinking money to write something . . ."

"You're saying to me, Well trust me . . . but you're not the guy who's calling the shots on the paper. Somebody else is. If they happen to be on the rag that day, I'm FUCKED! . . . ."

"If you want me to sit here and talk about my emotions you've got to be out of your MIND! . . . ."

But the echoes of the words faded as the singer came into the lounge with Brenda and walked purposefully over to the writer. "Honest," Altham spluttered, "this wasn't my idea. I didn't put him up to it!"

As Morrison pulled up a chair next to Stewart there was an awkward tension between them. Van seemed embarrassed because of the recent encounter.

"Well," he mumbled self-consciously, "can I buy you a drink?"

THE PARTY of seven London journalists, Pennie and Altham's assistant arrived in Belfast on the Wednesday, Morrison's second night. Altham had prepared them not to expect any interviews. Only Pennie and Stewart would travel to Dublin the following day, but they were instructed not to tell the others.

All the media attention for Morrison's first shows there since Them seemed incongruous for an artist who obsessively guards his own privacy. Yet Morrison had agreed to Radford's film, and on his arrival visited places like Cyprus Avenue with the crew. Nobody said which network would take the movie, but BBC's *Omnibus, Everyman* and *OGWT* were mentioned.

Even the local TV magazine prog *Scene Around Six* carried an item on Ireland's *only* rock legend, with footage from the show.

"In Whitla Hall, Belfast — the return of Van Morrison," read the announcer. "It's 12 years since he last played in his native Northern Ireland. Since then he's become one of the superstars of the rock industry, living out on the west coast of America.

"Last night's concert, and another tonight, was sold out with several thousand fans there to celebrate his homecoming."

His audience ached with pleasure; but the man remained untouched.

"I don't feel one way or the other; I don't feel emotional or unemotional. I just feel I'm doing the job. My job is to play music and deliver the show; and that's what I do.

"The stage could be in Timbuktu, Bombay, San Francisco, Belfast or Preston, Lancs . . . You're just dealing with the same thing no matter where you are.

"And that's what performing is . . . a performance, it's an act, it's just the same as somebody doing a play . . . You're not aware that you are in a certain city.

"It's more emotional for the audience, I think . . . what they sort of think you *are*.

"You have to deal with this projected image that's got fuck all to do with you basically. Because what you're doing is just presenting a show and music . . .

"People want figureheads; they want somebody to play a role."

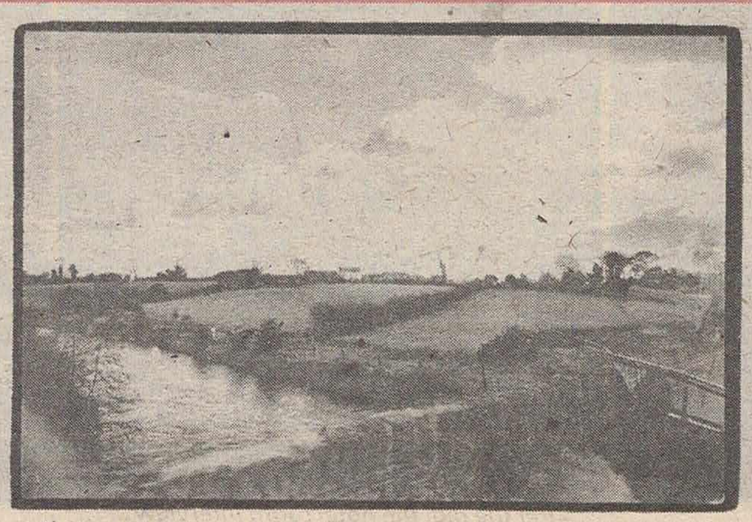
During the show Morrison was the complete professional. His ten-piece orchestra possessed the power to blow their redoubtable leader clear into the backstalls, but they were patient, restrained and disciplined. Clutching the mike in his left hand, Van controlled them strictly with his right: severe strokes with a clenched fist, light circling movements with his fingers, or he would fan his palm horizontally.

Back at the Conway Hotel, the post-gig 'do' was dull and uneventful; the journalists clustered around one table, members of the band around others, with Morrison silently seated by the door. Nobody dared intrude on him, and even Altham approached him through tour manager King on such a delicate matter as an interview with jolly Tobler.

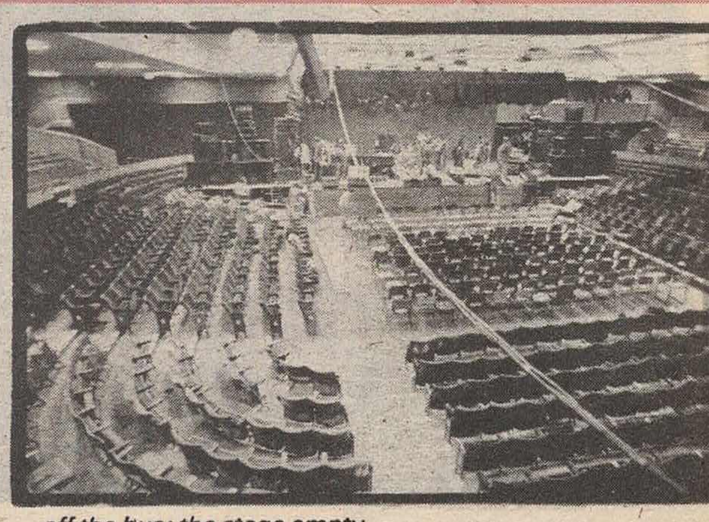
Although they'd played a 40-show American tour and then rehearsed in London with the two horn-players and a violinist for the UK dates, none of the band seemed to have any *special* relationship with Morrison. In his company they were subdued, sheepish even, and most of them discreetly slipped away from the reception to the hotel bar.

Stewart joined ex-Streetwalkers' Bobby Tench, Mickey Feat and Mick Bridgen (right-hand man to VM's manager, American promoter, Bill Graham) around a table nestled in a dark corner.

On the bus: the band ...

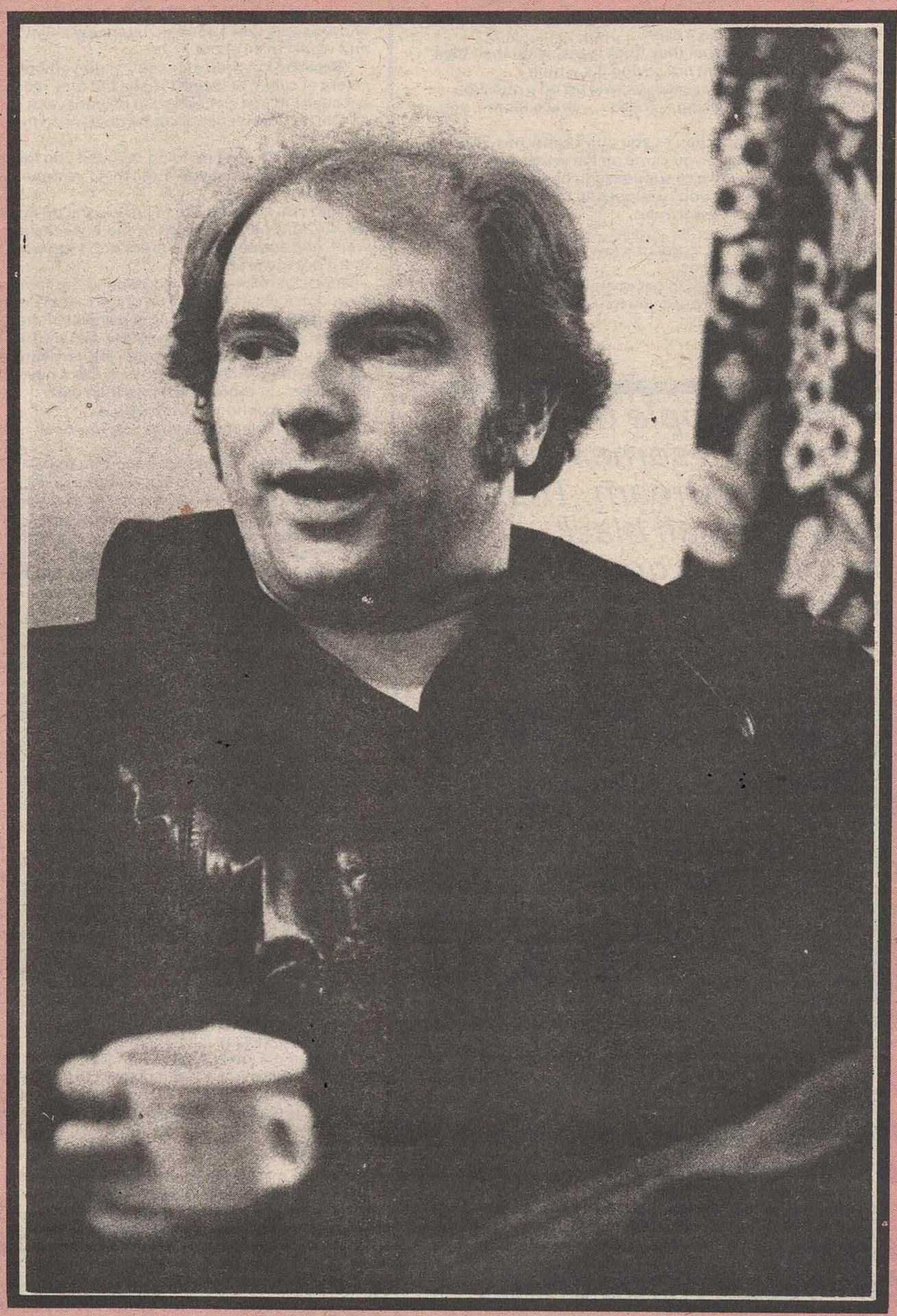


... the country ...



... off the bus: the stage empty ....

Photography: PENNIE SMITH



Drinking Remy Martin and Guinness, they were a boisterous group and a particular annoyance to the bar's only other occupants, Hughie Green and an attractive young lady.

"Anybody who can nick Hughie's bird gets 10 quid!" Feat challenged loudly.

"Gawd," chuckled Tench, "you've got all the subtlety of an air-raid."

Others joined the group: saxist John Altman, singer Katie Kissoon, keyboardist Peter Bardens and Pennie. Under the gaze of such an appreciative audience, Hughie and his ladyfriend angrily left the bar, moving over to the reception desk — *just* as Morrison stalked through the foyer, the film crew tumbling along behind him.

Flustered, Hughie turned his back sharply away from the camera; hearing the commotion, Van looked perplexed. "What's going on?" He wondered.

Later the hotel management tried to prevent a jam session taking place. Twice they hid the piano, but relented when it was finally found in the kitchen with the manager cowering behind it.

Hauled into a brightly lighted alcove for ex-Them member Phil Coulter to play, with Van on vocals and acoustic, guitarist Herbie Armstrong and violinist Toni Marcus, the music soon attracted a large, noisy audience. But the session was short-lived as a drunken paddy shouted at anybody and everybody talking, "IF YA DON'T LIKE GUD MUSIC, PISS ARFFFF!"

It was dawn when the last of the bleary-eyed tour party stumbled into bed.

Ah, rock 'n' roll.

STEWART WAS introduced to Van Morrison for the first time the next morning as the entourage prepared to leave for Dublin. They shook hands with stiff formality. Altham had arranged for the writer to travel in VM's car. "So that you can establish some sort of rapport before doing the interview after the show tonight."

Told firmly by King, who was driving, that he was not allowed to smoke in the hired Mercedes, he was manoeuvred into the back, sandwiched between two guys nobody bothered to introduce. Morrison was in the front passenger seat, a coat thrown over the headrest enclosing him like a tent. On the three hour journey they talked for perhaps five minutes.

Morrison was locked in his own thoughts, and in silence they drove through the bleak occupied territory of Northern Ireland. At the border they were met by the film crew, and Radford (one of the backseat passengers) directed operations by walkie-talkie. The cameras were supposed to pick up the car after a stop for a snack in a hotel, but they vanished and Radford lost radio contact.

"Can you hear me?" He murmured into his walkie-talkie, speaking so softly that even Stewart, right next to him, couldn't. The director was embarrassed, intimidated by Morrison's unspoken scorn, and everybody fell into a deep silence as they passed through Eire's beautiful countryside.

This land inspired some of the songs on 'Veedon Fleece', but now Morrison would never consider living there again. He is not a sentimental or romantic person.

"How the hell can I live in Ireland? What am I going to do — move to Ireland and open a grocery store?

"I'm in the music business. I'm not gonna sit up on a hill somewhere writing songs that are gonna sell ten or 20 albums. I'm fuckin' grown up now. I'm not a 17-year-old rock 'n' roll star."

The sun was shining majestically, tauntingly, when they arrived at the Dublin Shelbourne overlooking St. Stephen's Green.

Short, with a barrel chest, rapidly losing his hair and wearing a light grey pullover and baggy blue jeans, Morrison didn't look like a rock hero. He was described by one American mag as being like a plumber's mate. And somebody at the Shelbourne also thought so, resulting in confusion at the reception desk when Van asked if his girl had checked in.

Turning to King, the receptionist innocently asked, "Well, shall I get Mr Morrison on the phone?"

"I am Mr Morrison," the singer said firmly.

But nobody laughed.

For the first Dublin VM show in five years the touts outside the stadium had underestimated the demand for blackmarket tickets. Still holding a bundle of a 100 when the concert began, one was selling £5 tickets for £2. "But Oi can't feckin' givvum away," he complained.

Security was still tight and Altham had trouble getting through the shabby blue gates with Stewart, an Irish journalist and two local reps for Warner Bros. Liz, a pretty, dark-haired girl working for promoter Pat Egan, refused them entry even though the PR carried a backstage pass.

He quickly lost his temper. "I've got the 'flu ... a cold ... there are five people freezing out here ... now let *me* find somebody ... I work for Van Morrison ... I know their faces!"

For the third time, the girl asked his name.

"ALTHAM!" He bellowed straight into her face. "A-FUCKIN' L-T-H-A-M!"

"Now you can just wait out there for shouting at me," she sulked as two heavy-duty guards nudged him away from the gate.

The concert too was fraught with tension and aggression. It was a slightly different set to Belfast, but the sound was better and Morrison more at ease. By the end the audience were rowdy and impatient and during the subdued passages of 'Cypress Avenue' there was constant heckling.

Inevitably, one kid's frustration manifested as loud, insulting bellows.

When the houselights eventually came up the punk didn't see the bearded, angry hippy coming for him. He struggled limply as strong, bony hands grasped his throat. They spat fierce curses at each other and crashed into wooden chairs.

Bouncers separated them, but the punk lost his temper, picked up a chair and threw it into the people leaving the Stadium. As he lifted high another he was flattened by five grisly bouncers; a few minutes later — punched, kicked and dragged — the panicking punk was out of the hall.

In some ways symbolic of two rock generations clashing, by all accounts Morrison was as angry as the punk and the hippy when he got back to the hotel.

HE HAD mellowed by the time he reached the room where the interview would be filmed. Followed by the writer, Pennie and Altham, he eagerly ran up four flights of stairs, hasty to get the job done.

Everything was prepared. At ease, Morrison settled in an armchair as Stewart apprehensively glanced around the room. It had been de-personalised, stripped bare of luggage and clothing, the window opened for ventilation and all the lights turned on.

A cameraman with his machine on his shoulder faced the artist and writer, panning from one to the other. A sound-recordist toyed with a long, thick microphone in the corner. Altham moved out of vision and Pennie sat next to the cameraman on the settee.

"Hey," said Van to Radford, "we'll have to get Keith to come in and say, There's a gentleman from the *NME...*"

"You *want* me to do *that?*" the PR asked, moving over to the double bed behind the two people. "Spontaneously?"

"Spontaneously, yeah," Van answered drily.

"Now? *C'monnnnnnn,"* he gasped, incredulous.

Morrison began that long, throaty clucking. "Well ... if you don't feel like it," he challenged, "it doesn't matter."

"I can do it," Altham answered quickly, suddenly stretching across the bed, his face between the shoulders of the two men, looking directly into the camera.

"For your continued enjoyment at this theatre," he announced formally, "ice-creams will now be served in the interval. But prior to that we have an interview between Mr Tony Stewart of the *New Musical Express* and Mr Van Morrison!"

"Very good," Morrison praised, still laughing. But Stewart smiled weakly, tapped a biro awkwardly on his note-pad and waited for the laughter to subside. He could hear the whirr of the camera and felt a trickle of perspiration run down his side from his armpit.

■ *Continues over page.*

... and full ...

...After the gig, the hotel room interview ...

... leaving Belfast's Conway hotel ...

VAN MORRISON CONTINUED

■ *From previous page*

Aware of Morrison's stormy reputation and monosyllabic answers, he'd prepared a list of questions. But he'd hoped to begin casually. With the singer bent double, his head in his hand as his body shuddered violently, this now seemed impossible. Several times he began to speak, only to hear the continuous clucking.

"Did tonight's gig bring you down very much, Van?" Stewart inquired lamely.

"Tonight's gig?"

"The audience response."

"Ummm ... let me see ... no. No, not really. The gig never brought me down. I thought the gig was great, excellent. In fact I'm gonna have it framed."

"Because," Stewart fumbled, "the man that was shouting out at you got his, perhaps, just deserts afterwards. There was a bit of a *scuffle...*"

"Well, these things ... they happen sometimes.

"Next question!"

Morrison's euphoria had vanished and he was clearly antagonistic. Any hopes of establishing the necessary rapport were floundering; Van regarded the writer as an adversary, and the next 90 minutes were to be frustrating, humiliating and humourless.

Stewart was understandably uneasy, forced into a confrontation loaded in Morrison's favour. And *he* was irritable, frequently angry, disparaging and obstinately single-minded.

But it would be some time before he revealed his *real* purpose in even entertaining the interview.

They talked briefly about Ireland and then 'Wavelength', the latest album. It was probably VM's most positive statement since 'Saint Dominic's Preview' seven years earlier. And it had been followed by his first major world tour since the '74 'It's Too Late To Stop Now' tour with the Caledonia Soul Orchestra.

After a prolonged period of uncertainty marked by the bleakly disappointing 'Period Of Transition', Morrison seemed rejuvenated. And — Stewart thought — this had been inspired partly by America. "Now, I might have got this wrong," he said, "but..."

"ABSOLUTE BULLSHIT!" Morrison exclaimed angrily.

"You put albums out and people somehow get the wrong end of the stick and start reviewing the album as ... being about something. The only real reference to America in the whole thing is a couple of lines, *'Lost dreams and found dreams in America'* right? Which has got nothing to do with any American dream; it's not about the country — it's about my personal experience.

"A lot of people," he continued, "think I went to America and now I'm involved in some kind of American Dream ...

"That's like saying all black people have got rhythm or something. It's cliched ... garbage ... I can't even *relate* to anybody that's thinking *that.*

"So it's very hard for me to relate to people asking questions that are not only *borrring* but don't have anything to do with my life, or aren't *relevant.* It's a waste of time on my part — because it drains me from doing what I really wanna do, which is just do and play music."

Morrison had plainly ignored the point of the question — to trigger a discussion on 'Wavelength'; and during the first part of the interview it was a classic clash of writer and artist: the former gingerly offering his opinions on the album, while the latter found it hard even to *understand* critical analysis.

He was curiously unresponsive considering the optimism of such a song as 'Take It Where You Find It': *'And close your eyes/ Leave it for a while / Leave the world / And your worries behind / You will build on whatever is real / And wake up each day / To a new waking dream'.*

"Ummm ... I think it's very positive," he reluctantly agreed. "But I've done quite a few albums and this is another.

"So for me to take this one album or one song ... I can't find anything *relevant* in that, to sort of *grrrasp* on to, that I'm gonna talk about, to sort of make this *illuminating* to somebody.

"There's not enough there. I'm dealing with a whole picture and you're dealing with one part of it ... I don't have really anywhere to go."

But there *was* a general significance: when Morrison was last interviewed in *NME* (June '77) he'd said that between 'Veedon Fleece' and 'Transition' he'd been creatively "burnt out". 'Wavelength' was a cathartic release. "You could relate it back to your previous work," Stewart said. "Tracks like 'Brand New Day' on 'Moondance' ... the atmosphere of 'Saint Dominic's Preview' ... where you're making a very positive declaration of your artistic strength."

"Well ... what's the question?" Morrison asked. "I dunno what the question is."

The writer repeated his theory. "Would you agree with it?"

"No, I wouldn't agree, because you're trying to put words in my mouth. To me it's just *another* album. I'm not doing anything I haven't done before.

"I've been in this music business since I was about 12 years old," he snorted, "and it goes up and it goes down an' ... it doesn't make any difference to me.

"So for me to say, Well this album is *something* would be bullshitting you and myself and everybody else ... you're trying to get me to make it important and *agree* to the importance of it.

"You know, a lot of people didn't like 'Transition' — so what? When 'Veedon Fleece' came out a lot of people *fuckin' hated it!* Five years later the same people *love* it all of a sudden. The people that hate 'Wavelength' now are gonna *love* it next year, when my other one comes out, which they'll hate ..."

They continued talking; more questions were posed about other aspects of the album, but to no avail.

"I'm not trying to have a go at you or anything," Morrison sighed, "I'm trying to get a point across.

"I mean, with the state of the country . . . the strikes an' all things like that . . . you think people are worried about what somebody's saying in a song? I can't see that *that* is relevant to anybody. That's just gonna keep people stuck in an illusion. . .

"Obviously all these rags are into making money. They want to get something off me to make money. I'm gonna say something, like *blahblahblah,* and that is gonna sell the mag; or some famous personality will say something.

"An' I just can't see that that's *relevant* to *life* . . . I don't think that's healthy."

"I disagree," argued Stewart.

"You dooo?"

The writer explained that on the day Morrison opened in Belfast the infamous gang of murderers "The Belfast Butchers" had been sentenced. Still the fans turned up at his show; it was a form of escapism from the gruesome reality of their environment.

"That's exactly what I'm saying," Morrison anxiously emphasised. "But they're not coming to see Van Morrison. They're coming to see the image that was in the movie *The Last Waltz* — and *that's* not Van Morrison.

"They're coming to see what they think is me, what their idea of me is — which isn't me. I'm not saying it's wrong . . .

"What is me?" He abruptly asked, picking up on a question Stewart put while he was talking. "That's . . . that's for me, you know.

"What is me? I don't know you — you don't know me. This is a basic *set-up* situation, where you came on the scene. I met you today for the first time and we're supposed to be great friends an' I'm supposed to talk and you're supposed to go back to your boss and say, Look what I've got, man."

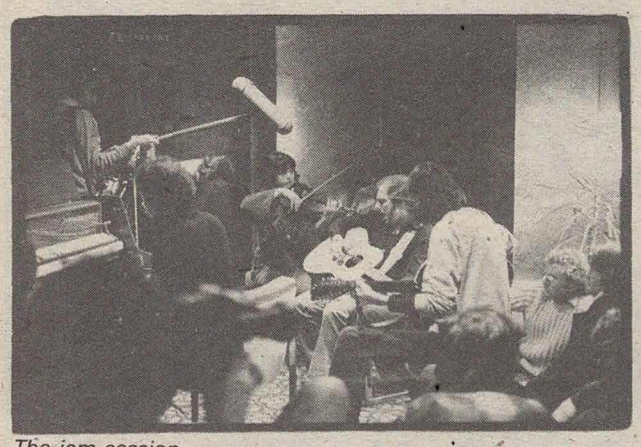
"That's fair enough," the writer agreed. "It is a false situation in that respect. But I'm trying to get to know you through your music. I'm asking you questions. . ."

"No you're not. You're trying to get something that has got nothing to do with music. Because you haven't asked me *one* question about the music *yet!"*

"I think I have."

"Which one?"

'A lot of people think I'm involved in some kind of American Dream. That's like saying all black people have got rhythm or something. It's cliched ... garbage'



The jam session

'How the hell can I live in Ireland? What am I going to do — move to Ireland and open a grocery store? I'm in the music business. I'm not gonna sit up on a hill somewhere writing songs that are gonna sell ten or 20 albums.'

'If you want me to sit here and talk about my emotions you've got to be out of your MIND!'

MORRISON'S preconception of how the interview should take shape was now overwhelming the writer. Stewart tried to justify his questions and, attempting to placate the artist who was becoming increasingly restless, asked about the reggae undertones in 'Venice USA'.

Both realised it was a feeble, strained compromise; but as soon as they moved back to the precarious terrain of lyrical imagery, they collided yet again,

"I'm not interested in what I did two weeks ago," Morrison said at one point, "or three months ago or what I said in a song — *does not interest me!* That's why I can't really grasp on anything, to pull you though where you want to go . . . accept responsibility for you."

"I wouldn't wish to abrogate my responsibilities anyway," Stewart asserted. But his interjection was not enough to stop Morrison.

"I'm not interested. *I don't care.*

"I'm not forcing anybody to buy the albums; I don't force anybody to go to the gigs; and that's what I'm dealing with . . . the direct line to the people who are buying the albums. I'm not dealing with your editor, or somebody who wants to know something about a song.

"When it's time for me to do that I'll do it myself. I'll sit down and I'll write a book and I'll backtrack and I'll go through everything. I'll say, this song was about *this.* But it'll belong to me and I'll have control of it.

"If I do that it won't be somebody else's opinion or theory about what I'm about."

Then — conscious of the camera and spectators — Morrison finally revealed his motive for tolerating the writer's presence.

"The whole point of what we're doing tonight is I want to show people *why* I don't do interviews, *why* I'm the way I am, and *what* I'm all about . . .

"Because I'm tired of being . . . preyed upon by the *pressss* et cetera et cetera et cetera. That's the *only* reason I'm doing this because I'm just sick and tired of whoever it is that's on the trip of, Oh, he doesn't do this or he doesn't do that, because it's all bullshit.

"As you can see I'm doing it. And if you research the last ten years of my activity, you'll see that I've done *quite* a few interviews.

"And you know I'd like to just clear it up and tell people that it's *FUCKIN' LIES* basically. Sometimes the press get what they want, and sometimes the press don't get what they want. But that's not my problem."

Angry, perplexed, often repeating the same phrases, Morrison's obsessive hatred of the media flooded out. He'd been misrepresented, maligned and exploited. "Well I'm here to say that *this* is Van Morrison!" He declared emotionally.

"But you guard your personal life very carefully," Stewart added mildly. "Although you said there have been lots of interviews . . . more good ones than bad . . . very few have penetrated to who Van Morrison is."

"Yeah, but what does who Van Morrison is have to do with what I'm doing?"

"A great deal I would have thought from . . ."

"I am in showbusiness . . . what the *fuck* does that have to do with the personal Van Morrison? What we're dealing with is showbusiness. . . *you're* in showbusiness of some form.

"Otherwise we wouldn't be here . . . and the only reason you're asking me questions is because . . . I have a name, and I am somebody, and I might move a few more papers, or a few less. But, it's something to *put* in the paper.

"Otherwise you wouldn't be talking to me because I'd be an unknown asshole, not worth talking to . . ."

"Actually," Stewart said simply, "the reason I'm talking to you is because you're a creative person. Your music intrigues me, gives me pleasure, and I'd like to find out more about it. I don't care about your personal life particularly — *unless* it touches on the music and influences it in any way. And in no way do I want to pry into that personal life."

"Yeah . . ." Morrison hesitated, "but . . . I mean to say it's got nothing *to do* with being in showbusiness."

"How do you mean?"

"Let me put it this way," he groaned wearily, the persistent tutor with the dull student.

"Have you ever watched an actor? He gets a script and he's got a part . . . and when he hits the stage he turns on a different thing. His mind changes, his concept changes, he's got to play a role for a certain amount of time.

"I do the same thing. Tonight I had to play a role for one hour . . . and I come back; but I don't bring the role with me.

"That's what I mean — I'm in showbusiness. I'm not walking around all day with the guitar, writing songs."

And then a few minutes later he admitted, "I don't get my pleasure from my gig . . . I'm not trying to get my kicks from this job. I don't expect it. If it happens, it happens . . .

"I'm doing a job basically — first and foremost . . . and what I get out of it is involved with playing the music and nothing else."

With this stark admission came the calm of despair.

ACCLAIMED BY critics for such rock albums as 'Astral Weeks', 'Moondance' and the definitive live album, 'It's Too Late To Stop Now', Morrison was unwilling — perhaps unable — to discuss the implications and significance of his music. A tremendous innovator, he was also an inspiration for the new age: Springsteen, Parker, Costello.

'Wavelength' was hardly the work of a spent force either; and yet gripped by a bitter hatred and *fear* of the press, there was little hope that he would publicly acknowledge his monumental achievements. He would be misquoted, misconstrued and disparaged yet again, he said.

Stewart had abandoned his list of questions, only a few of them asked, less of them answered. He'd never met a rock artist so sensitive to the press. "I find it difficult to understand — when I'm hoping to represent you fairly and honestly," he commented.

"There's always somebody gonna make me look like a buffoon," Morrison countered with certainty.

"The reason I got a press agent was because I was just sick and tired of it . . . so I get the best agent and it still happens. I pick up the paper and they go, Van Morrison left Belfast to become *faaamous.* That's all they could say about what I do, which is a complete joke.

"There's always somebody that wants to make you an asshole; or turn something round; or say something that's rubbish . . .

"Even when I've got it professionally together, it doesn't make *a bit of fuckin' difference. In fact, it's WORSE!* It's not only in the trade music rags, it's in papers like the *Daily Mirror.* I mean, what have I got to do with the *Daily Mirror*? Absolutely nothing."

"If you're a successful artists it's an inevitable part of it, isn't it?"

"That's *what* I'm *saying.* But there's no point in me doing this, so I'll have to be successful without it; or unsuccessful without it; whatever the outcome may be.

"But there's really no point in going through everything I've gone through to be fuckin' *used* by some guy who's getting drinking money to write something . . .

"They're still stabbing me in the back when they get the chance," he concluded despairingly, "so why should I do it? What the fuck am I getting out of it?"

Tonight, the writer answered, he would get a lot: he was making a film over which he had total control.

"But do I have a say in what goes down on this?" he asked pointedly, indicating the writer's cassette-recorder. "That's what I want to know."

"You do at this point, yeah."

"What say do I have?"

"By the questions I've asked and by the answers you've given."

"That's *it* then? But you won't let me play this back and say, I don't like this section and that section . . . you won't let me cut it up and edit it and send it to you.

"Somebody else'll do that. I won't see it. The tape will be

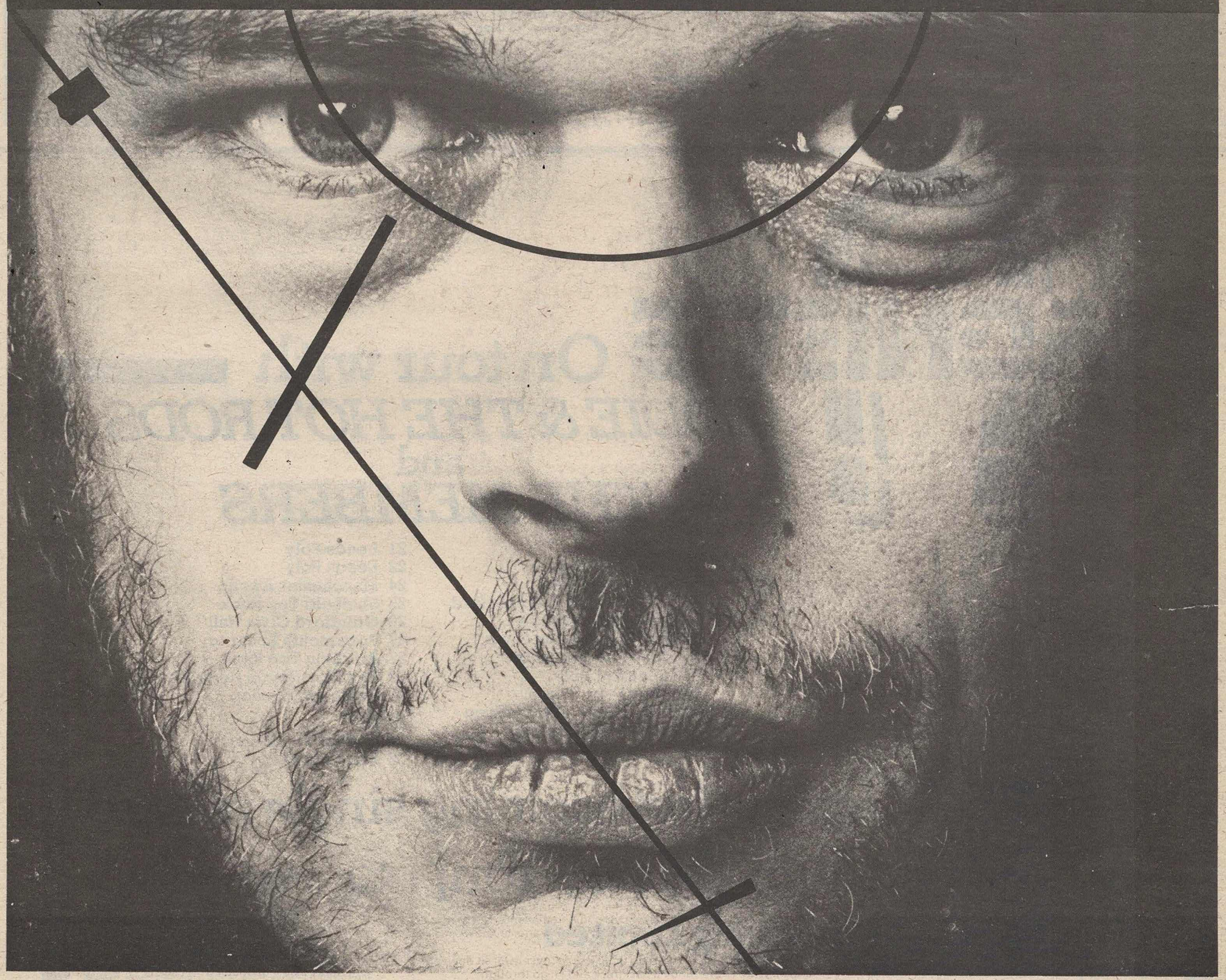
■ *Continues page 57.*

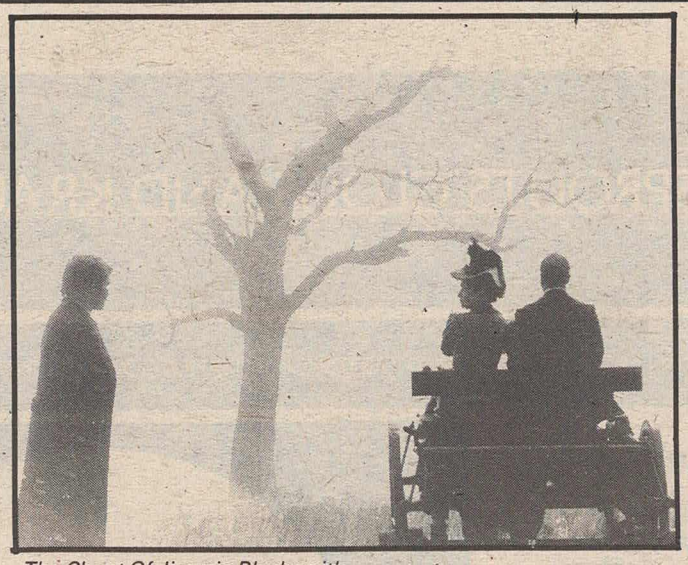
THE RUMOUR A EURO ALBUM FROGS SPROUTS CLOGS AND KRAUTS SEEZ 13

AQUARIUS DEALS WITH DEMOCRATIC COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HUMAN BEINGS WHO LOOK ON EACH OTHER AS BROTHERS: ITS RULER URANUS GOVERNS ELECTRICITY AND ASTRONOMY

THE RUMOUR
ON TOUR WITH GRAHAM PARKER

DATE		VENUE
MARCH	7	ABERDEEN CAPITOL
	8	GLASGOW APOLLO
	10	LANCASTER UNIVERSITY
	11	LEEDS UNIVERSITY
	12	BRISTOL COLSTON HALL
	13	EXETER UNIVERSITY
	15	BRADFORD ST GEORGES HALL
	16	MANCHESTER APOLLO
	17	MANCHESTER APOLLO
	19	BIRMINGHAM ODEON
	20	BIRMINGHAM ODEON
	21	IPSWICH GAUMONT
	22	PORTSMOUTH GUILDHALL
	24	BRIGHTON CENTRE
	25	READING HEXAGON HALL
	26	LEICESTER DE MONTFORD HALL
	28	DERBY ASSEMBLY ROOMS
	29	ILFORD ODEON
APRIL	1	OXFORD NEW THEATRE
	2	HAMMERSMITH ODEON
	3	HAMMERSMITH ODEON





The Chant Of Jimmie Blacksmith

An Axe Worth Grinding

The Chant Of Jimmie Blacksmith

Directed by Fred Schepisi
Starring Tommy Lewis and Freddy Reynolds
(20th Century Fox)

1900. When a provincial Australian hangman — he daylights as the town's butcher — is moved to remark "I don't meet them, I don't face them, I'm just part of the apparatus," it's crisply clear that our social context has shifted out towards the circumference of significance without so much as a bootleg for the bureaucracy of departure; way beyond gibbets and giblets.

A tireless theme — which haunts not only *The Chant Of Jimmie Blacksmith* but a good deal more of Australia's 'new wave' cinema of the '70s — is making itself manifest again: dominant, civilised 'white' ideology has evidently long lost touch with more intuitive codes of conduct, and is well up shit clique without a parable.

Australia's outsize anhydrous backyard has long been encamped upon and utilised to portray nature when nature is as alien as it is awesome — a more malevolent Mother Earth. California's candy-art movie market may have cornered the world's cheapest scenic metaphor with that San Andreas fault, but Antipodean schizophrenia is a steely tremor or two deeper and doomier, and far more demanding.

The deep-rooted devils of the nation's collective conscience have been exorcised before in films such as Peter Weir's excellent *The Last Wave* and *Picnic At Hanging Rock,* Ted Kotcheff's *Outback,* and even our own Nicolas Roeg's *Walkabout* — all seemed to find the necessary elements of synchronicity in the setting to satisfy the conditions for primal analysis.

Jimmie Blacksmith builds and balances on a multitude of indexes and axes, Fred Schepisi revealing and reviling racial repression and recrimination. The pack is loaded, the stakes black and bone-brittle, the cut not likely to be set in contours of light relief.

Schepisi has already been hung, drawn and disqualified by certain of our institutionalised wet-Leftist press *(I think he means Time Out. — Ed.),* who plump for the crassest reduction in the book — namely, that a white 'middle class' Australian has no access to analysis of Aboriginal history.

Rubbish. Schepisi is about as wet and liberal as a Samurai swordsman, his structural movements similarly subtle and sure.

Taken from a novel by Thomas Keneally based on actual events at the turn of the century — Federation days — *Jimmie Blacksmith* follows the pitifully brief lifespan of a half-caste Aboriginal boy. Brought up by a Methodist missionary couple, Jimmie manages to evade Imperialism's enlightened gifts to the primitive (booze, syphilis, the Boer War), gets snubbed and slapped down through a slew of jobs, marries a white girl and settles down at the edge of an employer's homestead. One night after an argument with 'Boss' over provisions and payment, Jimmie ups and slaughters his employer's wife and daughters.

The is the sequence advertised as 'not for those of a nervous disposition' but isn't, in fact, the most halting moment in the film — some of the Aboriginal rites are deeper slivers by far, physically and mentally jarring — Schepisi favouring action just off the carnage: flecks of gore tick against a white linen backcloth of Puritan permanence, the evening's supper spilling to the floor and curdling in the blood of innocent lambs.

Elsewhere, his excellent 'commercial' dialectic guides itself through a past-polished narrative — the escaped outlaw hunt — to maximise effect, drawing classic but cautious comparisons between the respective moralities of hunters and hunted. All the while, Schepisi pokes away at the sour carcass of Imperialist legacy, a squalid complex of swaggering compulsion and homely corruption perfectly captured in a sadistic, thickly perspiring Chief of Police — Ray Barrett has the toes of a bully.

Jimmie Blacksmith is the story of one man's struggle, an unnerving film about one nation's guilt, and a statement about something far wider.

Apparently, it's been dumped by an enraged and self-righteous Australia. There are, after all, some institutions you just *don't* point at, like the true Christian way of death — especially when you're part of the apparatus.

Ian Penman

SILVER SCREEN

Haunted Hunters

The Deer Hunter

Directed by Michael Cimino
Starring Robert De Niro, Christopher Walken and John Savage
(EMI)

Like all films that aspire to greatness, *The Deer Hunter* has arrived amidst controversy.

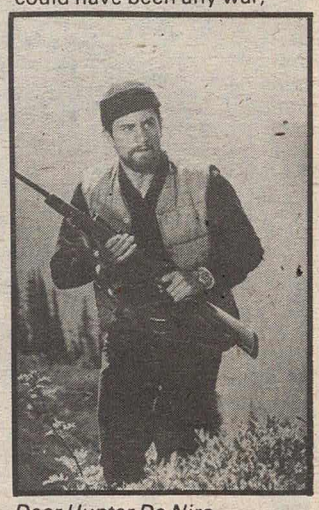
It's a political film, say the detractors, that doesn't work because it's not political enough. It's not a political film, says the director, it's about ordinary people, who can be quite extraordinary in the face of crisis.

It's about human solidarity and the place of great disaster in men's lives, says the lofty *New York Times.* It's racist, say the Russians as they quit the Berlin Film Festival with other Eastern bloc-heads, a prejudiced and disgraceful interpretation of a people's struggle that gained both the respect and support of the whole world. It's a masterpiece of the modern cinema, say the British Board of Film Censors in an unprecedented letter to EMI, mere congratulations seem inadequate for an achievement of this magnitude.

"This is *this,"* says Mike (Robert DeNiro), loading his rifle with a single bullet before the deer hunt, the image and phrase inextricably bound as it echos throughout the film.

This is this: *The Deer Hunter* is an almighty ironic epic.

It concerns a group of steelworkers in a tightly-knit Russian immigrant community in Pennsylvania whose lives, one Autumn in the late '60s's are radically transfigured when three of them leave for Vietnam. It could have been any war,



Deer Hunter De Niro

MAGNETS

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and
THE MEMBERS

MARCH
9 Liverpool Uni.
10 Strath Clyde Uni.
12 St. George's Hall Bradford
13 Edinburgh Odeon
14 Wolverhampton Civic
15 Coventry Locarno
16 Leicester Poly
17 Aylesbury Friars
19 Barbarellas, Birmingham
20 Newcastle City Hall
21 Leeds Poly
22 Leeds Poly
24 Manchester Apollo
25 Sheffield Top Rank
26 Guildford Civic Hall
27 Portsmouth Locarno
28 Brighton Top Rank
29 Pavillion Hemel Hempstead
30 Rainbow, London

APRIL
1 Cardiff Top Rank
2 Bristol Locarno

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insists director Cimino, but because it *is* Vietnam the shock waves are still reverberating around America, a nation plagued by guilt and self-loathing since that disastrous 'conflict'.

That the characters are of Russian stock is an obvious irony: "Is that a Russian name?" asked a doctor in Saigon's military hospital — "No, it's American," says Nick (Christopher Walken). But a more sweeping dramatic irony is the manner in which Cimino takes a basically small, chamber-like theme — life in a small town — and pits against the awesome backdrop of war and death.

This trichotomy (the film is essentially in three parts, each lasting approximately one hour) works as well as it does because not only does Cimino induce from his actors ensemble playing of the highest quality, he structures the film quite superbly and, most importantly, has the rare ability to convey a sense of place: we soon get to know our way round Clairton, where John's (George Dzundza) Bar is, the Eagle Supermarket, the Russian Orthodox Church, Lemko Hall, Mike and Nick's 'pre-fab' — even that Mike's battered Cadillac has a dodgy boot.

And all the while the steel mills loom forbiddingly in the background, an entirely unromantic grimey grey-pink. As in *Blue Collar*, we see the men — Mike, Nick, Steve (John Savage), Stan (the late John Cazale) and Axel (Chuck Aspegren) — at work, in the foundry's dangerous sweat shop, as well as at play. And, as befits men who have shitty jobs, they play hard. The bar is open 24 hours a day and for more bracing rereation they take to the Allegheny mountains for ritualistic deer hunts.

As Steve prepares for marriage to the pregnant Angela (Rutanya Alda), the

Deer haunted De Niro

genuine sense of community is underscored by Cimino's deftness at revealing his characters' smallest traits. The camaraderie of these six friends is made clear in an early barroom pool-playing scene, which beautifully delineates their closeness. (And I'll go spare if I hear another myopic crack about US movie 'paeans' to buddy-buddy homoerotic/machismatic relationships — this is this, remember, unless you want to stick with innocuous bits of fluff like *Girlfriends).*

It is in the long, finely detailed wedding and celebration sequence (the first part of the triptych) — in which Mike makes stumbling attempts to gauge how deeply Linda (Meryl Streep) cares for Nick — that so much is revealed about the various relationships, and it is only on a second viewing that this section achieves maximum effect, with the realisation that these people's lives are soon to be irreparably shattered by Vietnam.

The only dark note introduced — aside from a pointlessly accentuated spillage from the 'Good Luck' cup— is the appearance at the bar of a disenchanted Green Beret, dubbed Fuck It by the rebuffed revellers. And it is, unsurprisingly, the film's second section which has so galvanised American audiences.

With a single, masterful cut — from the friends, slouched around the bar, listening to John's mornful piano playing after the final hunting trip, to a napalm raid in Vietnam, ominously overlapped on the soundtrack by the thick whirring of helicopters — Cimino dumps us, 18 months on, slap in the middle of combat.

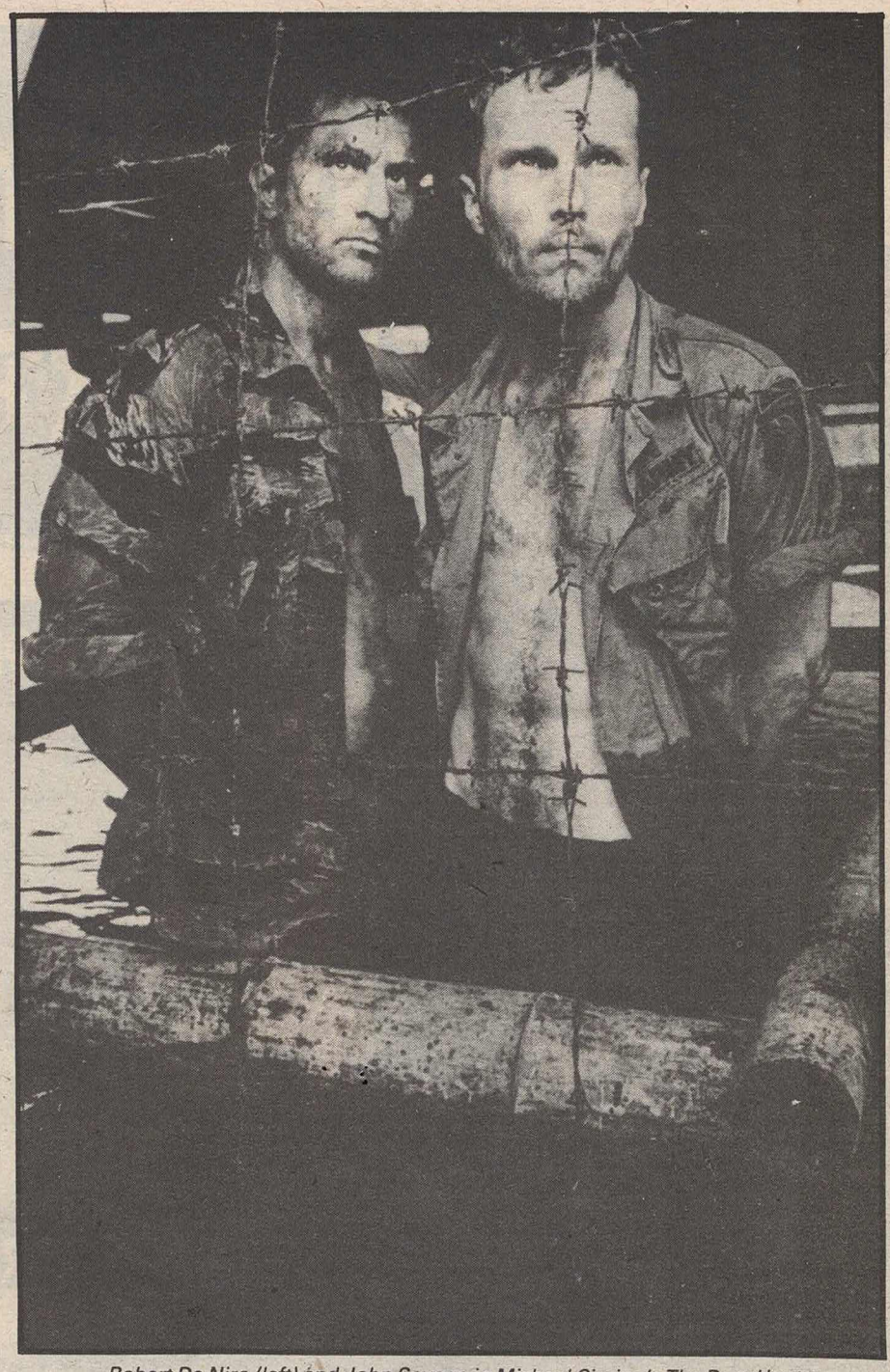
What follows is probably the most enervating piece of cinema yet committed to film. After this brilliantly destabilising cut, the camera magisterially records acts of unspeakable horror with a cruel, gruelling subjectivity. There is no reason, no logic in these profoundly disturbing scenes — the only beneficiaries of the war are the wild hogs fighting over charred remains in the mud.

The horror is relentless and unimaginable, the gut-churning tension strained to breaking point and beyond. We can only watch in mute disbelief. Nothing else in the film can match this central sequence — indeed, *everything* else tends to pale into insignificance — and the final hour is a noble anti-climax. Necessarily so, because Cimino isn't soiling his hands with mere polemics here — he's dealing in fundamentals: friendship, loyalty, loneliness and — yes —dignity.

It's an extra-ordinarily life-affirming experience, confirmed by the climatic singing of 'God Bless America' (ludicrously misinterpreted as being jingoistic in some quarters), a haunting chant in the dark of despair by people desperately wanting to *belong.*

The Deer Hunter boldly demands to be taken seriously. That makes it a rare and important film.

Monty Smith



Robert De Niro (left) and John Savage in Michael Cimino's The Deer Hunter

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23rd JB's, Dudley
24th York Revolution
26th Carlton Club, Warrington
31st London, Rock Against Sexism Venue TBC
TBC Wakefield Unity Hall
TBC Leeds Fan Club

On Tour with The Undertones

MARCH

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THE ONLY ONES, THEIR NEW ALBUM.

'EVEN SERPENTS SHINE'

The Only Ones are Peter Perrett, John Perry, Mike Kellie and Alan Mair. They made their debut in January '77 and their first single, 'Lovers Of Today', was released soon afterwards on the independent Vengeance label. The band then signed to CBS U.K. and cut the much acclaimed single 'Another Girl, Another Planet' and their first album 'The Only Ones'. Between live performances, they've found time to record this their second album, 'Even Serpents Shine', which is available now.

SEE THE ONLY ONES LIVE

MARCH
7 NEWPORT STAR WAY CLUB
9 NORFOLK THE PAVILION
10 HULL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS UNION
13 DURHAM UNIVERSITY STUDENTS UNION
15 EDINBURGH ASTORIA
16 ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS UNION
18 DUMFRIES STAGECOACH HOTEL
21 SHEFFIELD POLY
22 MIDDLESBROUGH TOWN HALL CRYPT

ALBUMS

Roxy's Ferry — or is it Ferry's Roxy. Pic: Chris Walter

Bryayatollah Ferrani returns—and it ain't half tepid, mum

ROXY MUSIC
Manifesto *(Polydor)*

Exactly seven years ago — March 1972 — something stirred in the basement at Command Studios.

The first Roxy Music was in the process of creation, the new age was underway — re-make, re-model. It was special, fine art English rock: the '50s, '60s and deadened '70s all rolled up into one immediate wham. Suddenly Roxy Music proved that fashion was fun — we were all dressed up with somewhere to go.

And Roxy Music, alongside David Bowie, had the blue-prints and the buildings in their hands. Until they arrived 1972 was an extremely dull time. Roxy and Bowie took the horns of a bullshit dilemma and made a style out of style (which was the whole point). That debut, 'For Your Pleasure', 'Stranded', Bowie's 'Ziggy Stardust' and the revolting (if influential) 'Diamond Dogs' — these were arbiters of taste, the first break of a new wave, encapsulated for posterity. Who could forget the thrill of the early tours, Roxy at the Croydon Greyhound, the fresh air of 'Virginia Plain', the sheer mass hysteria?

Inevitably, Roxy Music's appeal weakened. Ferry was expected to deliver beyond his brief. The band remained interesting observers of the social whirl. The blank generation started life in Bibas, not in Sex.

After they disbanded, for reasons that escape me at the moment, it was always assumed that a return was inevitable. From 1976 the various invidiuals pursued artistically valid projects but failed to recover the impetus of old. Often they seemed to be operating in a vacuum with Ferry adopting a series of increasingly twee images, few of which suited him.

So how different is the new look. Well, 'Manifesto' has the old ring about it but other changes have also been rung. Punk, funk and disco are permanent fixtures. Is there a place for Roxy Music in the current order? Or have they returned to set the pace again?

In fact, these burning questions are damn near impossible to answer after a brief acquaintance with 'Manifesto'. Its sides are entitled, ominously, East and West, probably one of Brian's jokey red herrings as the lyrical content may have more to do with the Fulham Road than the Great Wall of China, even if the title cut takes a polemical stand. To a backdrop of urgent, fragmenting pomp and circumstance Ferry warbles some equally grandiose sentiments:

I'm for the man who drives the hammer / To rock you till the grave / His power drill shocks a million miles away.

Hmm. The mannerisms of yore are intact though the profundity barometer is not moving. The more seriously you take the cut, the more the ludicrous pretension. Safer to assume that Ferry is writing his manifesto according to the standards of 'My Way' — as such, the track is entertaining.

The single 'Trash' walks the ground where the smart punkettes tread, a slight piece of good humoured kitsch with some suitably throwaway chording from Manzanera.

And so it goes: the familiar high camp, the sound and the fury, all adding up to a lot of that mentioned style but somehow missing the content of true surprise.

There are exceptions. 'Still Falls The Rain' packs a melodic fast fire repeater with Ferry weaving his maze of deliberate Jekyll and Hyde personae around a genuine band cohesion enlivened by some sterling weirdness from Manzanera who is the real musical star on this outing — Andy Mackay being lost in the backbeat without contributing anything more interesting than some duff sub-Ronnie Laws diluted funk riffing).

The closer on East side (does Paul Butterfield know about this?), 'Stronger Through The Years', threatens to enter the realms of higher stratospheres with either Alan Spenner or the ex-Vibrator, Gary Tibbs (both do a grand job throughout) laying into some meaty Jaco Pastorius colouring, leaving the keyboards to provide a gamut of sounds that transpose sterility against oblique counter melody. The song doesn't sit easily. Its involvement and convolution should make greater sense in performance.

The West side slides into view on a combination of muted blues and looping rhythm on 'Ain't That So', while Ferry twists and contorts around a reiterated refrain in his arch lounge lizard skin. The singer's facility with crushing ennui — that world weary pose — is retained for all of the remainder. Both 'My Little Girl' and 'Dance Away' conjure up forgotten images of the crooner frugging across a deserted floor. Ferry's hall of mirrors obsession is filtered through veils of soulful self-pity, increasing in amusement value when we get to 'Cry, Cry, Cry', a modern Motown skit which fuses dumb phasing and a really chintzy back up vocal to hilarious effect (indeed, the preceeding 'Dance Away' even opens to the sound of a flicked match and that first drag, an ongoing smoke gets in your eyes situation).

Ferry breaks with levity and what I take to be an element of self-parody with the closing song, 'Spin Me Round'. This boasts the album's one great arrangement, a hypnotic whirlpool of balletic grace and a poignant lyric to match.

Ultimately, I found it hard to work up much enthusiasm for 'Manifesto' and a replay of 'Would You Believe' or 'Sea Breezes' indicates why. In many ways the band have come full circle without evolving anything dramatically new — at least not according to those initial standards.

For the moment, Ferry and his cohorts seem content to rely on tried and tested ethics which may pall in the context they now find themselves in. Perhaps greater familiarity with 'Manifesto' will reveal hidden magic.

At present it merely comes over like an assured, modern, dip into friendly territory — an entertaining, pleasant album.

Max Bell

Tom points another accusatory finger: "Up against the wall, Ferriani!" Pic: Paul Cox.

TOM ROBINSON BAND
TRB Two *(EMI)*

This is the diligently prepared and acutely-self conscious follow-up to that shaky first collection which naturally ended everyone's excited and premature self-congratulation over a singularly feeble rebellion. The anxiously determined intentions are obvious all the way through.

If nothing else, Robinson must be admired for his flexibility and humble willingness to accept and adapt to the severe criticism that flooded his way once the shield of awed fervour slipped away and it became pitifully apparent that his stance was quaint and cracking under pressure, his 'revolt' alas inoffensive and the musical form of his urbane propaganda and polemic disastrously limited. 'TRB Two' is an appreciable musical progression from 'Power In The Darknes', yet it remains unconvincing, erratic, the work of a mediocre craftsman way out of any reasonable depth and gamely grinning while stuck in an impossible predicament. For the second time of saying, this is not a good rock and roll album.

Despite the concern with strengthening and varying the form, the ambitious association with studio specialist Todd Rundgren (an American) and Robinson's attempt to toughen and justify his burdening, burgeoning moral and aesthetic conscience, 'TRB Two' is unsteady and unconstructive. Like everything Robinson will ever try to do, it sadly suffers under the weight of the man's own destructive and toothless charm; he remains the angel without teeth, the angry young man trying desperately to suppress that cheery smile.

Robinson may never provoke real controversy or confusion, never affect society or encourage widespread questioning of it; he's more likely to inspire complacency. Oh no? Oh yes! We get what we expect from Tom Robinson: cardboard-urgent factionalism. He points, amiably and engagingly, like a whining Tom O'Connor, prods just a little, and that's it.

Indicative of the mediocrity is the fickle and dull nature of his songs, here teased up and padded out by Rundgren with more hope than anything else. The abstract concern and enthusiasm for the content can't be denied or reproached, but Robinson's attacks and assessment of bigotry and injustice, always sung with predictable and conservative jaundice, are assembled without any hint of life or character. Throughout the album sentimental, unstimulating servings of poorly documented, undramatic statements are drily and plummily sung.

The album's cosy packaging provides dutiful access to a pile of alternative advice — the inner sleeve is packed with a list of addresses for the troubled and/or minorities, also with incongruous literary references. Under each title on the back sleeve there's an 'apposite' motto or quote; these are often the best things about the songs.

'Blue Murder' closes side one; a typical TRB sighing-ballad, it's the most complete song on the record. A steady blend of organ, guitar and bass, it has a cool, clear structure. Robinson's words are less awkward than usual, and there's even an absorbing coda. It's a safe, mildly challenging description of the appalling Liddle Towers "justifiable homicide" debacle. It's also far less indignant and effective than the Angelic Upstarts' Small Wonder single 'Who Killed Liddle Towers', and a powerful Towers line printed on the sleeve — "If I've done anything I'm sorry, but please leave me alone" — is more moving than anything in the song (the album itself is dedicated to Mrs. Mary Towers.

All of which proves that Robinson, once he's chosen his subject — and on this album there's significant indication that Robinson is working within tight horizons, like Lenny Bruce once upon a time forgetting that the world, yours and ours, isn't only made up of simple targets like injustice, minority groups and so on — he just hasn't the magic to come out with a lyric or couplet that can take the listener's breath away, put the song into focus and justify its presence. The rest of side one is brisk, basic and brightly set by Rundgren, who's obviously aiming for a big sound with lots of detail and some contrasting frivolity, for that idealistic balance of education and entertainment. 'All Right All Night' is an extrovert, hopeful greeting, fast enough to avoid plodding, a seductive burst of naive trust. Rundgren at once reveals his Americanised angle for bolstering Robinson's dubious communications; he emphasises on Danny Kustow's dirty guitar, the rock'n'roll in TRB, and deftly positions Ian Parker's gimmicky organ. Such balance continues into another moderately disgusted but plain rocker, 'Why Should I Mind', a song of pathetic and deceptive resignation with some attractively askew organ.

Distinctive Kustow chords move us into 'Black Angel' and further transparent trickery to instil fun and permanence into the bulky TRB sound. Here a typically formless TRB song is shaken into some sort of shape by using embarrassing mock-gospel mannerisms. 'Let My People Be' relies on objectionably shallow reggae rhythms for its support, and yet again harks back to neo-gospel for its cliched chorus. It's a tale of worldwide inhumanity that melts away. As with all Robinson's implorings, there's no tangible defiance, disgust or even emotion. More often than not, tne obvious mood is submission.

The contrived attempts at viability and variety continue throughout the less (yup) entertaining second side. Five untidy and uninteresting songs precede the tiresomely obvious reflective closing piece, 'Hold Out', the kind of blunt ballad Ian Hunter used to sprinkle with inane charm throughout the early Mott albums and produced with gruesome grandiosity by Rundgren.

'Bully For You' is the single, co-written with Buddy Gabriel. The plod of TRB is given slight swing, and the insertion of a typical Todd chorus gives the piece unusual depth and elegance. Robinson's vocals spoil it. "Crossing Over The Road" disguises convention with slight sleaze. A song stuffed with symbolism, it's just too unexciting to incite in any way. It's a drag.

Elsewhere 'Sorry Mr. Harris' is typically smug TRB irony. Robinson adopts his best Tory councillor parody voice — inanity mocking impotence — over more plain rocking. 'Law And Order' is typical TRB whimsy with its pub piano, cheery Ian Parker vocals and a dumb and dubious attack on the police. TRB have yet to say anything positive about their prime target. 'Days Of Rage' is typical TRB pace and protestation, livened as usual by Kustow's treacherous guitar and Walker's derivative but direct organ.

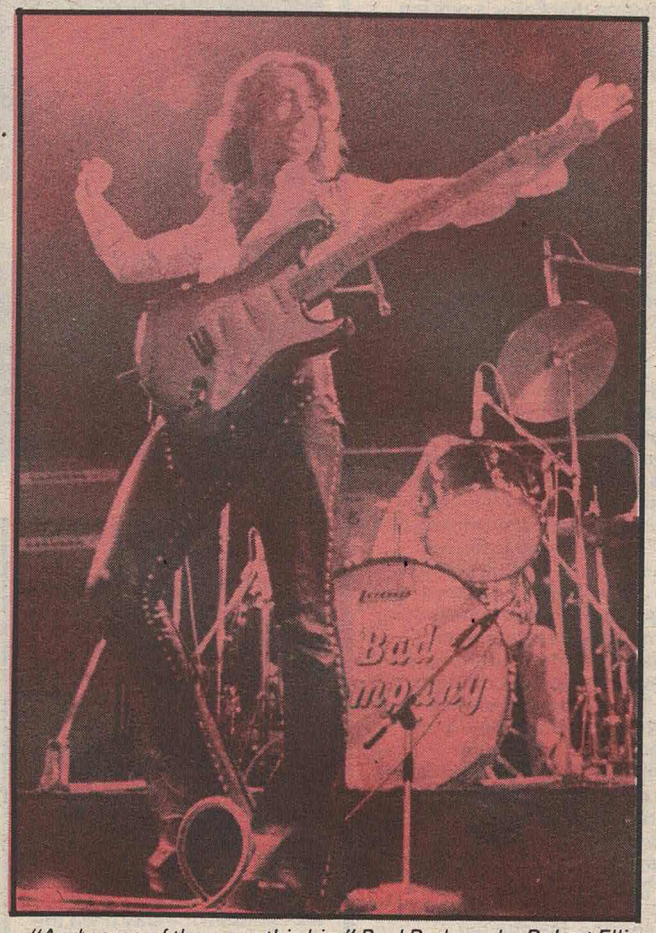
'TRB Two' is extremely depressing. It does try, but breaks no barriers. It drifts and dithers more than it demands and attacks. It is neither good art nor exhilarating entertainment. It clumsily and unnecessarily emphasises the futility of rock'n'roll as a weapon of change; rock'n'roll that does any sort of 'changing' needs to be chaotic, crude and self-destructive.

Of course, Robinson's sincerity and honesty, also perhaps a barely veiled determination, are his redeeming factors. But can such tepid and naive activity be excused by conviction?

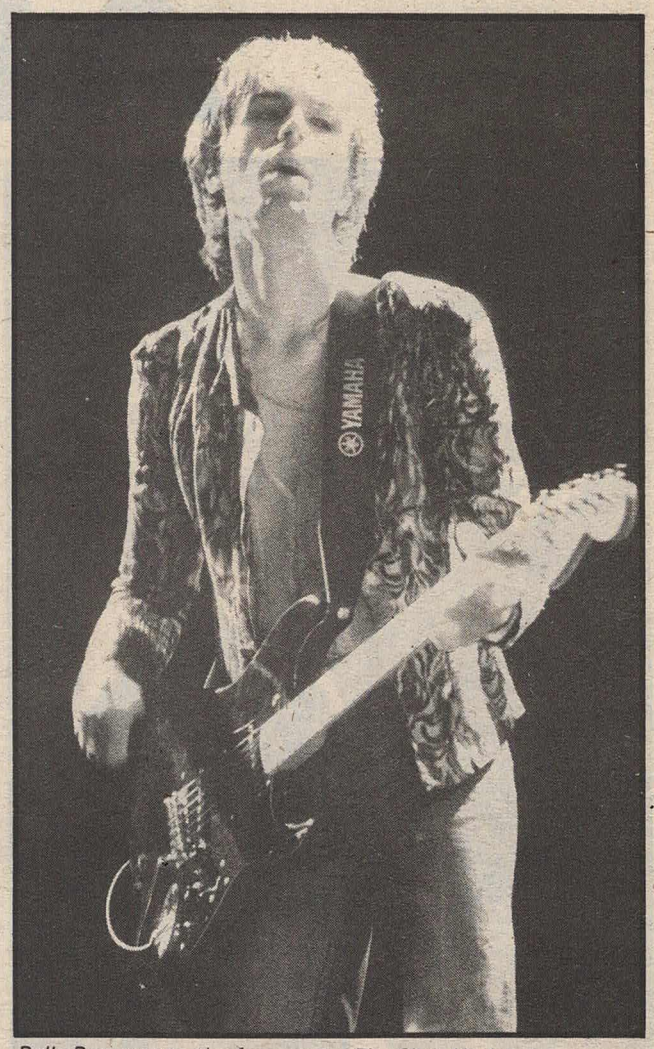
Paul Morley

Robinson: a crusader without faith?

Fee Waybilge and a pair of Toobs. Pic: Chester Simpson.



"And some of them are this big." Paul Rodgers by Robert Ellis.



Polly Perrett puts aloof stance on. Pic: Chris Horler.

THE TUBES
Remote Control *(A&M)*

You didn't know Todd Rundgren had a new album out, did you? He has.

It's by The Tubes and it's called, co-incidentally, 'Remote Control'. Rundgren has made no great secret of the fact that he produces records to finance his own career. He signed, sealed and delivered this about the same time as 'TRB Two' and the forthcoming Patti Smith album, in the wake of his new-found market viability with Meat Loaf.

The logistics should be obvious. Meat Loaf and The Tubes are both 'theatrical' in various over-blown ways and it was hoped, perhaps, that the Runt could repeat his tricks with another 'difficult' act. Given his disposition towards kitchen sink production jobs, and The Tubes' fondness for overkill operatics, it's a wonder this escapade didn't just kitsch'n'sink.

But it doesn't. In fact, it's quite ordinary by Tubes' standards — trite social satire, few ugly smears — though quite good by Utopia's standards. Utopia are Rundgren's regular band, and his hand (and voice, and songwriting trademarks) can be detected so heavily on this that it might as well be the new Utopia album.

Assuming this is what they actually wanted from the alliance, Fee Waybill's company must be in some sort of conceptual quandary. They've toned down their usual deft manipulation of style in favour of a subdued homogenous sound. Changes were inevitable, since 'Tubes Now' was about as good as they could get on record — a great unsung collection of advanced satirical vignettes — and that didn't exactly set the cash registers a-clanging.

So they've made a concept album based around their namesake. Not the smart option, I would have thought, but a predictable one. Trouble is — and this criticism has been flung at The Tubes before with far less justification — it sounds more like six songs in search of a stage production, plus four more looking for a way to fit in.

Granted, the idea is a sound proposition in an age when the two per cent of the population who don't own a TV don't know what the other 98 per cent who do are talking about half the time, but the level of humorous insight is noticably thin and a lot of the references (to American TV shows) pass one by.

The titles of the cycle tell the story: 'Turn Me On', 'TV Is King', 'Prime Time', 'I Want It All Now', 'No Way Out' and 'Telecide'. A cathode kid on his way to a TV O.D.

Only 'Telecide' evokes The Tubes' fast and furious sideways witticisms, the rest seem to drown in their own designs — partly Rundgren's fault, since he seems to have no idea how to arrange and mix The Tubes' eight-piece line up and simply opts for a kind of aural stew.

'Remote Control' could have been the recorded version of the film *Network* — a black comedy about the neuroses of television — but it's all motion and no meat. Cheaper but funnier thrills at the expense of the American condition can be had from Zappa's 'Sheik Yerbouti'.

Of the four disconnected cuts, 'Love's A Mystery' is a Rundgren torch ballad written and performed by The Tubes, 'No Mercy' refers to the rat race, 'Only The Strong Survive' refers to the fact that it's a cut-throat rat race, and 'Be Mine Tonight' is as obvious as its title suggests.

It's an appealing record, as far as the Runt's work goes these days, but it's not The Tubes I know. It's neither gross nor subtle, and both these things they have been in their time. It's simply commercial and flat.

Then again, perhaps you have to see it on TV to know what they're getting at.

Paul Rambali

BAD COMPANY
Desolation Angels
(Swansong)

Ever tried shooting ducks in a barrel? It's almost as easy as doing the old aesthetic pistol-whip on Bad Company. It's so damned easy trashing this record to hell and back that I have this perverse desire to instead accentuate its positive aspects, to go against the grain and shoot for the high sign.

Not the one negative review from me or any other snivelling scribe will have any effect on the enterprise at hand and its chances of success. It's as pointless to berate Bad Co for their indolence, their smugness, for the fact that they say absolutely nothing, that they have the inspiration of minus one peanut and that you or I could compose the songs on this record in about a minute apiece as easily as spitting into the wind.

Bad Co have their niche, see. In the States bands like these honchos — Van Halen, Ted Nugent and so on — know the score exactly. Their audience want to be spoon-fed with just the soggy slop they're peddling. Bad Co merely put the bib on the bimbos and drip-feed the poor wretches with cliche after cliche, making sure that nothing, but nothing, with any hint of reality slips inadvertently into the whole garish pantomime.

The opener here, 'Rock 'N' Roll Fantasy', perfectly sums up the charade, although its composer Paul Rodgers obviously can't even glimpse at the half-cocked perception that lurks behind the facile sentiments which go along with all the other others with 'rock'n'roll' in their titles. It's a paean to the zombie ritual with the usual big, brash chords and facile clout for bozos to beat their heads against the nearest wall to. A real anthem, in fact.

For the record (sic), Rodgers' songs fill most of side one, and tackle all the usual cliches. He's the perfect macho man — all dumb stud strut with his crotch straddling the mike-stand for the hard grist as he opines such pearls of wisdom as *'Life is like a carousel/You aim for heaven, end up in hell'*. Yet underneath that tough stuff exterior there's the inevitable sensitive soul counterpart crooning homebody love songs with dippy sentiments like 'I love 'cos I want to' and the ilk. There's one in every pub, although they might not all be so well equipped with vocal plumbing.

Mick Ralphs is an altogether more sorrowful entity here. He's got three songs on the second side and they're all atrocious. "Lonely For Your Love' is so bereft of *anything* that he has to reprise the old 'Can't Get Enough' riff to flesh out its rotting carcass, whilst 'Oh Atlanta' is bilge beyond belief — some Hereford lad earnestly pining for a return to Georgia isn't even worth thinking about.

Surprisingly, ignoring the fact that this record has no tangible reason to exist at all and that the band are a quartet of uninspired musical sloths, the only saving grace comes with bassist Boz Burrell's "Gone, Gone, Gone'. The riff is vice-grip strong and the lyrics, while nothing spectacular, at least don't dribble out the old Rodgers-Ralphs inanities; the song even proves that the band, when not locked into their little limbo, can shape up well — Rodgers *is* after all a hot singer — into a viable hard rock combo able to tackle good Stax-Volt on their own terms and bring the hammer down.

But just one reasonable track? You've really got to laugh when it all comes down to dust and wasted vinyl. The very fact that Bad Co have sold out all their air-hanger venues proves that nothing has really changed amongst the spud-brain (no Devo reference implied) rock population slavering for the macho strut and dry ice schtick.

The least Bad Co could do is make sure all paying customers are given free bibs.

Nick Kent

THE ONLY ONES
Even Serpents Shine *(CBS)*

The Only Ones bear the mark of greatness.

On stage they have the ability to really *dominate* an audience, trapping you between the bewildering poles of Peter Perrett's narcissistic whine and John Perry's brutal guitar, forcing their point home through a combination of stealth and aggression. They don't drill neatly through a set number of riffs; they *sprawl* across a song, each member reading it in his own way so that they build up a composite picture that appeals on several levels at once and — when the strands really grip tight — can coerce your senses like a sledge-hammer.

It's an approach which suits the loose song structures and tortured emotions that are the grist to Peter Perrett's creative mill, but it pays its highest dividends on The Only Ones' three hard-rock classics: 'Lovers Of Today', 'Another Girl Another Planet' and 'City Of Fun' — brilliant encapsulations of ecstasy, cruelty and sensory abandonment with a stunning group assault to match.

As yet, none of the eleven songs on 'Even Serpents Shine' has that magic for me. Sure, give it time — all Only Ones records grow on you (in fact I've yet to encounter one track that hasn't improved every single time I've played it) — but that essential element of wildness or savagery seems to be missing.

Yet despite the lack of obvious thrills, 'Even Serpents Shine' is a fine album. Perry is unusually restrained, but even his mellowest moments have a steely air of contempt. His surly, drawling guitar is reminiscent at times of Hendrix's lazy power — and just as 'Another Planet' fed off 'Bold As Love', so the doomy lines of 'Curtains For You' recall the grandeur of '1983 (A Merman I Shall Turn To Be)'.

Perry's a star in his own right — a guitarist with a rare blend of technique, feeling and attack — and in Alan Mair (bass) and Mike Kellie (drums), The Only Ones have a support cast of equal quality who take Perrett's scratchy rhythmisms and bring his moods and obsessions to life.

This is a brooding album. Perrett dwells morbidly on love-hate affairs shot through with metaphors of death, darkness and despair, full of melodramatic language like *"set me free from this sorrow"* — yet somehow he gets away with it, the most convincing romantic nihilist since Lou Reed.

Right from the off we're wrapped in dark, squalling guitars on 'From Here To Eternity': *"I see a woman with death in her eyes/And I don't have the time to pray/For her salvation or for her soul/She walks her chosen way/But in the darkness and the light/I have found some hope/Of me getting out from this underground/I can't wait to get back home . . .*

"You make me feel responsible/For the state you've got yourself in/Oh I know it's impossible/For you to ever be the same person again . . ."

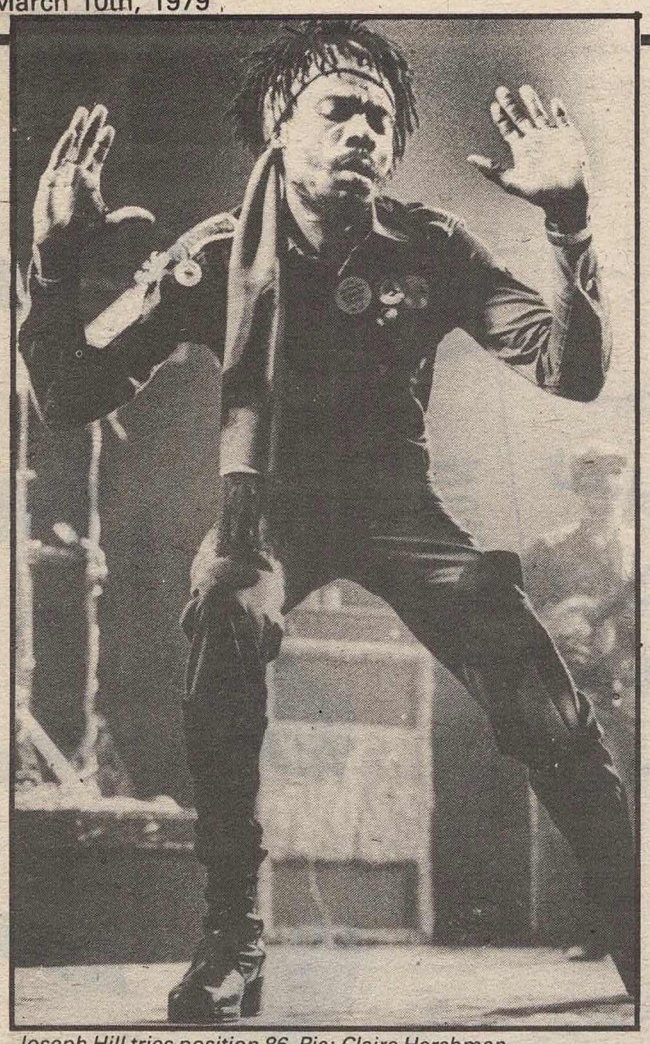
Linger on your pale blue eyes and I'm set free . . . to find a new illusion: shades of the Velvets' third with twice the muscle power of 'Loaded'. It takes a few plays to sink in, but no one else is even attempting what The Only Ones achieve so gloomily on this track.

Perhaps inevitably, it's lighter fare from there on in — at least, by comparison. But even when Messrs Mair, Kellie and Perry come over all jaunty and melodic, as on 'Out There In The Night', poor old Peter's still lamenting the love he lost and his lonely misery.

Indolence, Mr Kent informs me, is The Only Ones' only failing. Certainly this album — which consists to a large extent of gems from Perrett's untapped back-catalogue — would have benefitted from the presence of a couple of 'up' songs, a dose of the heady passions of 'Another Planet'. Even if it meant replacing old favourites with new.

The Only Ones' master-piece is yet to come, but this is still a redoubtable album — which *does* improve with every play. 'Even Serpents Shine' is an alluring mixture of focussed emotions and assured performance: and they really are the only ones doing it.

Phil McNeill



Joseph Hill tries position 86. Pic: Claire Hershman

CULTURE: Cumbolo (Virgin Front Line)

When they hear the word 'culture' some people reach for their guns, some of their Royal Opera tickets, and some for their sociology textbooks.

Still others reach for their reggae collection where 'culture' is about finding and maintaining your own identity in a system that's often committed to keeping you in ignorance of it or robbing you of it once you've found it. That's why all the talk of 'roots and culture', of 'knowing your culture' and why three young Jamaican singers should choose 'Culture' as their collective name.

It's no idle boast; their songs and their music deal directly with the positive goals and beliefs associated with 'culture' in general, and with the inevitable conflicts that arise with the system when people decide that they've had enough *sufferation* and that it's time to hold out for something better.

Culture is Rebel Music — and not merely because leader Joseph Hill delivers chants against police oppression in the likes of 'Natty Never Get Weary' but because he and the group have a positive and alternative vision to impart — a vision of a land based on equality and justice where humans treat each other rather better than they tend to now. It may be that you share the attitude of the *Melody Maker* critic who last year dubbed Culture "singing Jehovah's Witnesses" and if simple statements of human love and impassioned resentment against oppression take you that way then too bad for you: *yuh think you living in heaven but you livin' in wha'?*

Still, back to the grubby economics of record-buying.

For natty cultural fans 'Cumbolo' offers few surprises but many continuing delights; for the unCultured the album's as good an introduction as any to the group's slightly confusing elpee output. It is, perhaps, their most 'commercial' offering to date — commercial not due to any pandering to the lowest common denominators of market taste, but because of its unremitting excellence.

Crossover without compromise.

For all that 'Cumbolo' lacks the instant captivating identity of both Culture's seminal 'Two 7's Clash' outing with Joe Gibbs two years back and the 'Africa Stand Alone' set put out by April Music last year. The latter album contained several alternate (and superior as I would seh) versions of songs on 'Harder Than The Rest — Culture's debut with Virgin last year — and thus tended to rob 'Harder' of its identity.

All of which doesn't stop 'Harder' from being a singularly brilliant record — and much the same is true of 'Cumbolo', where three more of the songs from 'Africa' show up in refined, recut form together with last year's 'Natty Never Get Weary' single — perhaps one reason why Front Line have seen fit to stack a mammoth 55 minutes worth of material on the album, value-for-money fanatics please note.

The actual sound of 'Cumbolo' is much as before — deft, weaving melody lines, naggingly catchy hook lines, mid-tempo understated rhythms that catch up with you halfway though a song, and above all the singular passionate vocals of Jespeh Hill who as lead singer and writer *is* Culture to all intents and purposes.

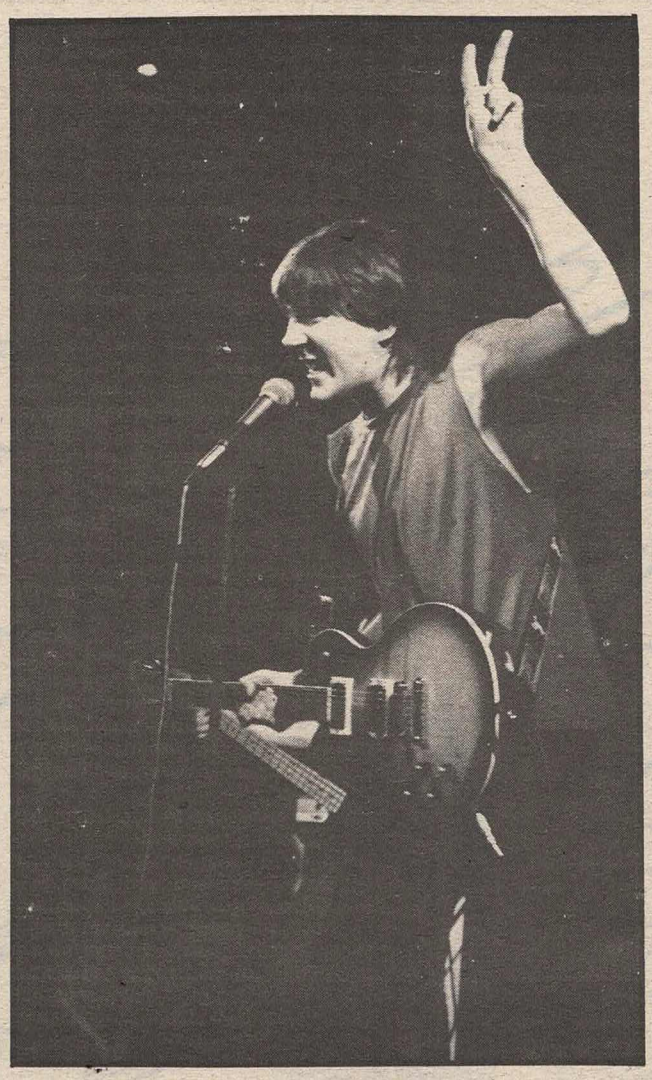
Burning Spear is the most obvious point of reference for Hill's vocal style — there's the same power, the same unlikely liberties being taken — but if Hill lacks the awesome majesty that Spear invests in his delivery, he has more streetwise wit and humour.

The songs vary between the familiar if worthy sentiments and feel of 'Natty Dread Naw Run' and 'Them Never Love In This Time' to the more intruguing karmic considerations of 'Pay Day' *("When will these retired slaves get payed?)* and 'Mind Who You Beg For Help'. 'Down In Jamaica' is Culture's tribute to Garvey, 'Innocent Blood' their testimoney to needless suffering and bloodshed, both of them no worse for their updating from 'Africa Stand Alone'.

That leaves 'Cumbolo' itself, a subtle, shifting exhortation and 'Poor Jah People' where Joseph gets plenty of chance to display his rambling testifying style to best effect *"We've never been given the chance one little time to control our own lives."*

My main objection is to the rather fussy horn arrangements that manager producer Sonia Pottinger has given the group, which tend to trip and stumble the loose-limbed country gait of Hill's vocalese. Otherwise the playing is immaculate as the predictable session list here would suggest.

Neil Spencer



"And this one's for Tom Robinson." ATV's Mark Perry.

ALTERNATIVE TELEVISION
Vibing Up The Senile Man ***(Deptford Fun City)***

We have a new mystique-object emerging before us, unidentified across certain clips of candy-crass jargonese: 'industrial', 'experimental', 'avant-garde', 'radical' . . .

A reassuring aestheticization of 'alienation', on the one hand, and on the other of trivia. Bowie and Eno, with their false 'intellectual' epaulettes, have a lot of blame to shoulder.

Here's Mark P: alternatives, angles and aggravation, all in all wanting to vibe up the senile audience. 'The Image Has Cracked', the first ATV album, caused a very real stir. It was a caustic redefinition (as with that drastically mis-criticized Public Image LP), a liberation from useless limelight limitations, a good way toward starting to de-mystify modern beat music.

Given Perry's history of arrogant resistance — more power than rigour — this was only to be expected, but was still something of a surprise: a scrape away at traditional rock'n'roll aesthetics — formal fashion and fun.

'Vibing Up The Senile Man' escapes the traps of those concerns yet again, if only unfortunately to replace them with a set based around equally mistaken ideas: the importance of *tradition* and *influence* considered as hurdles of 'acceptance'.

Alternative TV have plotted themselves a vector into that torpid grid of random sound/oblique statement as pioneered in rock by B. Eno and P. Orridge without the nastier histories of such elder dabblers, certainly, but a safe move for them nevertheless.

The 'method' implies that 'conflict' is context enough, that determination rests in technique rather than ends: an excuse of an envelope around a form without content. The accompanying fact sheets are a graphic illustration. Influences and likes *don't* clarify questions of origin and project; name-checking simply invests a very sticky stake in tradition. 'Tradition' isolates the new against a backdrop of permanence and transfers merit to 'originality' and 'genius', to the decisions proper to (groan) — individuals.

The simple act of making the personal public does *not* ensure the validity of the utterance. The album begins with 'Release The Natives', of which Perry says *'I've no idea what the song is actually about.* From a purely aesthetic viewpoint — as those of us in the art community without two braincells left to rub together still take — there are no tangible ideas here. Ominous for a while — shout, crash, slither — there's no attempt to resolve in any direction. 'Serpentine Gallery' is about the den of inertia of the same name and lacks sustained tension or texture.

'Poor Association' is the pivotal, autobiographical track — *'A boy is very sensitive' he is a worrier and an artist. One day he freaks out . . . cuts his tongue out in a fit of anxiety . . .'* — about where we in the social context, crack up.

'The Radio Story' is similarly dumb-dramatic, third person kitchen sink, whereas 'Facing Up To The Facts' is more first person cybernetics and coffee table, a very 'personal love song'. Side two sees 'The Good Missionary' retreading the formula used in 'Release The Natives' whilst 'Graves Of Deluxe Green' goes *'Will we waste away in graves of deluxe green halls and deluxe green walls'* and in 'Smile In The Day', the 'second part' of 'Poor Association' — well, the boy dreams of Delius . . .

ATV — now Perry, Dennis Burns, and new recruit Dave George — already have plans ready for 'Vibing Up The Senile Man (Part Two)'.

Perry is obviously interested in practical change. Presently however his goals and ideas don't involve any risk of him taking sides. 'Vibing Up The Senile Man (Part One)' is a neutral project, discreetly and unmanageably private.

ATV are tied in technique. Meaning 'exists' only 'in' the music.

Perry doesn't deserve all this, you say? Unqualified romanticism, reactionary liberalism, they continue to dribble through the music press unabated, but that isn't a cue to damn ATV — or anyone else — with faint praise. Can I help it if the senile critics . . .

Ian Penman

Hot Rod Barrie, master of none. Pic: Pennie Smith.

EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS
Thriller ***(Island)***

And the boys stood on the burning dreck.

Early '79: third album. It's put up or shut up time for Eddie And The Hot Rods, the band who bridged the gap between the Feelgoods and the advent of punk. An enthusiastic, upretentious bunch who started out playing Canvey R&B, became the brightest hope of '76 and still retained enough streetcred to make the cover of *Sniffin' Glue,* they ended up always being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Too brash when it was hip to be mature, too fun-orientated when relevance was in, too pop when punk was the rule. They got dumped on a lot, rarely fairly (their first two albums have worn better than anybody would've thought at the time) and worried about it.

Now separated from their manager/producer Ed Hollis, the Rods evidently feel that their backs are to the wall. Unfortunately, their response has little chance of doing much to alter the situation. 'Thriller' — despite its exquisite packaging — is an overproduced, directionless mess that attempts to overwhelm and succeeds only in irritating.

For a start, the material is less than impressive. Out of the ten songs, only four sound like they have any real substance, but the kind of 24-track excess favoured by producer Peter Ker smothers the good material as ruthlessly as it seeks to bolster the weak. There are about four times as many guitars as is actually necessary at any given moment, vocals are overdubbed with almost completely superfluous harmonies presumably courtesy of Linda McCartney, who is not exactly the first person most people would consider calling in for such tasks), and the general effect is one of clutter.

The album's two singles 'Media Messiahs' and 'The Power And The Glory' would seem to be about the fact that artists other than Eddie And The Hot Rods seem to gain critic approval and rockpress covers these days. The impression is simply one of pointless whining, since it's hardly a subject liable to sound a chord of recognition in the hearts of the general public.

Dave Higgs, who was the principal songwriter on the first Rods album and who contributed a mere one song to their last, herein notches up three and a half songs, and get his name on three of the album's four best tracks. 'He Does It With Mirrors' is almost intriguing, but is swamped with so much useless garf by Ker that it is virtually unlistenable. 'Out To Lunch' is a motormouth picaresque adventure song in the tradition of Dylan's 'Bob Dylan's 115th Dream' or 'Get Out Of Denver' or any number of Berry songs, and it represents a partial return to R&B, but why enlist Lee Brilleaux and Jools Holland on (respectively) harp and keyboards if you're going to bury them under mountains of cranked-up, hysterical guitar?

Brilleaux crops up again on 'Breathless' (written by Graeme Douglas and Paul Gray), which is chiefly noteworthy for some sharp guitar/harp exchanges between Douglas and Brilleaux during the instrumental break. Higgs' 'Living Dangerously' rides the album out with a witty, sardonic return to basics, but Simon Nicol poleaxes the song in its tracks with a drum contribution that suggests that he was suffering from a temporary paralysis of one side of his body.

'Thriller' makes the Blue Oyster Cult sound like a new wave band (could Ker and the Rods have been trying to Do A Pearlman?). As an attempt to crawl out of the dumper and make Eddie And The Hot Rods a band to be reckoned with once again, it is the most dismal failure imaginable.

Personally, I'd love to see the Rods storm back with something excellent, but this is one 'Thriller' that'll make you want to switch channels halfway through.

Charles Shaar Murray

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Have you seen this woman? DUSTY SPRINGFIELD at the Flamingo, 1965.

Lost women: more bad news

DUSTY SPRINGFIELD
Living Without Your Love ***(United Artists import)***
KIKI DEE
Stay With Me ***(Rocket)***

These are hard times for Dusty Springfield fans. Three uneven albums in the last nine years (plus one similarly erratic collection of out-takes), and I can't remember when she last played a British concert. Yet the feeling persists — Dusty Springfield is a great, great singer.

A five-year silence was ended by last year's 'It Begins Again', which had a softer, breathier Springfield voice trying out a variety of MOR pop and soul styles, with even a hint of disco.

'Living Without Your Love' is more of the same, but less varied and less interesting. The promise of experimentation on the previous album has been forgotten. There's an unexceptional Barry Gibb song, an understated 'You've Really Got A Hold On Me', a jazzy treatment of the silly 'Closet Man' — and nearly all the rest are romantic ballads.

They don't work very well, because they aren't extreme enough, and Dusty sings them in her new soft voice. The old hits, which they recall, only worked because they were performed with tremendous strength — from the gloriously spectacular arrangements to the passionate intensity of the singing. These new songs are just pretty, drippy and dull. Some of them are even by Carole Bayer Sager.

Only on the closing 'I'm Coming Home Again' does Dusty sing with real feeling — and then you know she's still good enough to break your heart.

Why, oh why, didn't she stay with soul? Why does she seem so lost? Maybe it's down to her own bizarre musical tastes; maybe it's because when you're a forty-year old female pop singer, there's really nowhere to go. She's working in the dark — no other woman singer has followed a similar career, so there's no example to follow.

Kiki Dee is a comparable figure. Another pop singer with an interest in soul, she was the first white artist signed to Tamla Motown. It wasn't until Elton John took a hand in 1973 that she enjoyed a degree of success. (Curiously, Elton also wanted to work with Dusty, but that plan fell through.)

She remains, though, an artist without a strong identity — a sort of adult pop singer who comes nowhere near resolving the contradictions that term implies. She's not an impressive singer — she has a powerful voice, but rarely exploits it to the full and her singing is usually devoid of any emotional charge. Her version of Lorraine Ellison's 'Stay With Me' just sounds loud rather than soulful.

The three songs which Kiki co-wrote are a cut above the rest; but on the whole, the album is no more than standard pop fare, performed with little passion and less imagination. She seems to be another artist lost within a man's world.

Graham Lock

THE RAMBLERS
The Kids Are Back To Rock'n'Roll (*Crystal import*)

Gott in himmel! And what have we here, eh?

The Ramblers is what, a German punk shout-fit who blast across the terrain of imported English social disorders with a well tempered kick ass fetish that treads a thin line between HM and correspondence course new wave and actually steers clear of inducing the wholescale mirth that usually results when foreign chaps take on an alien style.

The Ramblers are probably an exciting live proposition, guitarists Frank Becking and Carlo Karges own the necessary selection of licks to rock, many of 'em borrowed from the long lost Pistols scrapbook — 'Submission', 'Anarchy', obvious parallels — spiced up by liberal steals from Status Quo (who are big in Nuremberg).

Vocalist Christian Schneider manipulate his larynx around some Rotten and I. Pop stimuli and material like 'Never Gonna Break Me' and 'Solid Ground' are a tribute to the all pervasive power of Common Market punk.

Ultimately it's all junk of course, German garage *weltenschmerz* with a whiff of home based originality that means nowt to me but may well get the Hofbauergasse locals foaming at the mouth and biting at the bit.

Callow rhetoric but definitely rock unt roll. Ja? Nein? Please yourself.

Max Bell

AL CAMPBELL
Mr Music Man (*Manic*)

'Mr Music Man' has an appalling cover — something like Jamaican tourist board meets Greek Street primitive advertising uptown — but is well purchasable nonetheless.

The expected keep-it-fit rhythmiers — Dunbar (drums), Shakespeare (bass), Collins (organ), Sticky (percussion), etc — establish and embellish appropriate presence for the voice of Mr Campbell, rippling the scale sufficiently without ever tipping the material beyond its station.

Music designed to be dealt with on an unassuming, undemanding level: late night. not quite Lucozade. Arrangements are palatable rather than palatial, pliable and assured — triggered by an occasional sneaky dub, as on the title track. Favourite tracks are 'Ease Up', 'Mr Conman'(*'Mr Conman, you're going around with your briefcase'*) and 'Perhaps' — a track previously covered by ascendant messiah Dennis Brown.

This is a genre unto itself which, unlike white 'intellectual' attempts at background music, doesn't feel the need to fetishize low-key ambience or amplitude. In its own context it manages to achieve maximum accessibility without sacrificing roots.

I enjoy it in a same way, yet *stronger* than the last Gregory Issacs set. Pop from Creation!

Ian Penman

Christians 0, Lions 15

ISHMAEL UNITED
If You Can't Shout Saved You'll Have To Face The Penalty ***(Dove)***

When reviewing After The Fire recently, I made no mention of their Christianity — it's hard enough for new bands as it is. With Ishmael United, such discretion is impossible.

On the evidence of 'Saved', produced by ATF's Andy Piercy, these boys should have stayed in the closet. At their best, they're a second-rate After The Fire, but mostly we're in sub-Rice/Lloyd-Webber country — tepid 'rock' music subordinated to stilted lyrics.

Whatever their source, vitality and conviction are a likely basis for good music. You could enjoy 'All Things Must Pass' without heading guru-wards and 'Volunteers' without storming the barricades, for instance. But Ishmael Utd. aren't exactly the Edwin Hawkins Singers.

Leader/singer/lyricist Ian Smale (nickname Ishmael — get it?) is generally leaden and literal, though the title track labours the metaphor of life-as-a-football-match: *'And when the final whistle blows/You're gonna lose your soul,'* etc. Easily the most offensive is 'Caroline Robbins', a breathy, unctuous sermon to a lost girl: *'You can't turn to sex/You can't turn to drugs . . ./Your life is such a mess/And Jesus keeps calling your name'*. Come back Terry Dene.

Musically, there's some irritating cod reggae and even some punk mannerisms ('Song Of The Last Generation'), all rendered equally unpalatable by Smale's preach-a-gogo.

A recent change to Rev Counta And The Speedoze won't help. When someone's ramming panaceas down your throat, the last thing you do is ask him his name.

Harry George

(Album available from Dave Evans, 77 Conbar Avenue, Rustington, West Sussex — price £4.25, inc p & p)

ISHMAEL UNITED: unlikely to score.

Imports

"One day," Ben Sidran once confided to me, "They're going to stick Tom Waits, Michael Franks, Kenny Rankin and myself all on one bill — then everybody will be able to tell how different we all are."

I knew what he meant. All four, though contemporary acts, have roots in the jazz of 52nd Street. But while Waits has elected to come on like a cordite-throated bop beret bearer and Sidran remembers Minton's through a funk-filled, blues-hued, josh and jive haze, Rankin and Franks have proved the light-weight contenders, the guys who, in the '40s, mike-grabbed at the plush dusk-till-dawners, causing the hat-check chicks to indulge in vertebral vibrations.

'Tiger In The Rain', **Michael Franks'** fourth Warner album, once more has the 'no change' sign up. While this John Simon produced and arranged shot has a Rousseau tiger adorning the sleeve, on record Franks still makes like a purring pussycat. Once more his supporting feline philanthropists are cool cats — Montreux mogs like Ron Carter, Flora Purim, Kenny Barron, Lou Marini, Bucky Pizzarelli, Mike Mainieri, Seldon Powell, etc. And, once again, his songs are pithy but catchy flyaways, sophisticated as a Coward cuff-link. *"We're so francais — with lime and Perrier"*, he breathily confides at one point, amid references to Satie, Copacabana cocktails and Lotis Kings.

It's easy to see why some are ready to write him off as an effete bore, a musically zoot-suited Manilow — but I'll confess to a sneaking regard for Frank's lightly-cooked confections and I'm not ready to hand in my cult membership for a while yet. After all, any guy that uses the Crusaders as a back-up squad on two albums and handles Man-Tran numbers like 'Popsickle Toes' can't be all that bad — or can they?

I would hazard a shrewdie that **Raphael Ravenscroft's** 'Her Father Didn't Like Me Anyway' (Portrait) was conceived with Yank appeal much in mind. An amalgam of rock, funk and jazz, treated with a coat of high-gloss MOR, it's the kind of nitzy razzmatazz that'll fit neatly in between the Martini and hamburger commercials on stateside radio.

Ravenscroft was, as all wax-faxers know, the sax-tooter who supplied the instrumental hook on Gerry Rafferty's 'Baker Street'. And on 'Anyway' the Rafferty connection is well in evidence, the title song emanating from the Humblebum songbook — the producer being Hugh Murphy, who worked on Rafferty's two solo albums — while members of Raff's riffing back-up band aid and abet. Someone slipped up on the sleeve though — for the skills of John Patrick Byrne have not been employed. Instead, you get a sax and sex job that once more indicates dollar-diggin' diligence.

Fred Dellar

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(REGGAE NIGHT)
COMING SOON WED 21 SON SEALS BAND

IF YOU WANT TO ADVERTISE YOUR GIG RING BRIAN B on 01-261 6153.

LOCAL OPERATOR

Thursday March 8th
WINDSOR CASTLE
Sunday March 11th
PEGASUS

EARTHBOUND

AS A RESULT OF LAST WEEK'S MEETING BETWEEN THE **LIBERATED LADY** AND THE **ROBOT** IN **SOUTH KENSINGTON, EARTHBOUND** ARE HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE THE BIRTH OF THEIR FIRST 12" BABY AT **ARCHWAY RECORDS** HOSPITAL ON MARCH 10th. BIRTH CELEBRATIONS WILL BE HELD AT: **THE TRAMSHED**, WOOLWICH — **MARCH 14th**; **SCHOOL OF AFRICAN & ORIENTAL STUDIES**, MALET ST., WC1 — **MARCH 15th**; **THE DUKE OF LANCASTER**, NEW BARNET — **MARCH 18th**; **THE GREEN MAN**, PLUMSTEAD — **MARCH 24th.**
ENQUIRIES: **ARCHWAY RECORDS 01-203 4632.**

AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'
FROM BROADWAY
The New FATS WALLER Musical Show
REDUCED PRICE PREVIEWS FROM MARCH 16th
OPENS THURSDAY MARCH 22nd

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE
Haymarket SW1 TEL: 01-930 6606.

U.K. SPRING TOUR

BETHNAL

WITH

NEXT

Sat 10 Mar/ Northampton Cricket Club
Tue 13 Mar/Manchester Polytechnic
Wed 14 Mar/Sheffield Polytechnic
Fri 16 Mar/Langley College (Slough)
Sat 17 Mar/Barbarellas (Birmingham)
Tues 22 Mar/Hucknall (Welfare Club Notts)
Fri 23 Mar/Middlesex Polytechnic (London)
Sat 24 Mar/Kingston Polytechnic (Surrey)
Sun 25 Mar/Chancellor Halls (Chelmsford)
Thurs 29 Mar/Music Machine (London)
Advance tickets for Music Machine £2.00/on door £1.80

LUTON COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION
Park Square, Luton
& QUARRY PROMOTIONS PRESENT
RAG BALL with
RADIO STARS
+ JOHNNY G + Support
Saturday March 10th
Tickets £1.80 in advance, £2.00 on door

Bankside present

BANK OF DRESDEN
PSYCHEDELIC FURS
THE TESCO BOMBERS

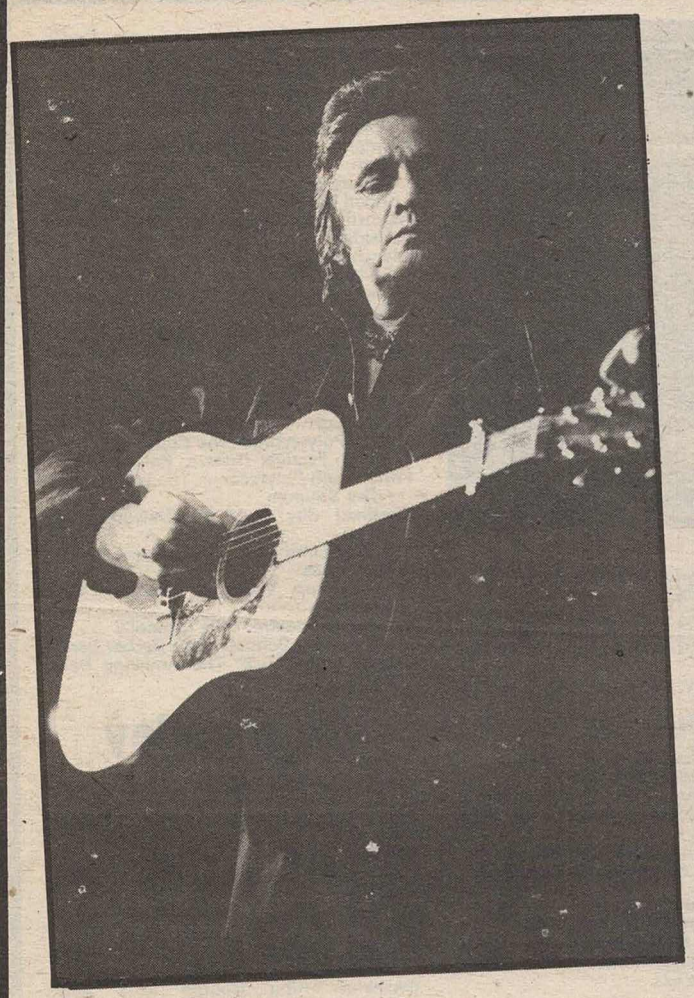
Africa Centre, 38 King Street, Covent Garden
Friday March 9th £1.50

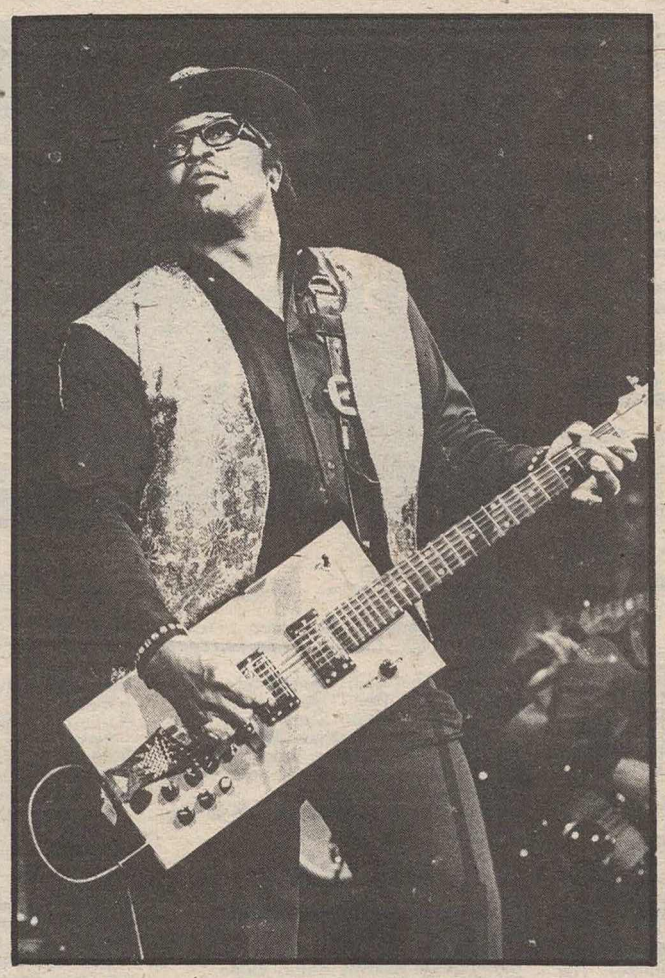
TOP RANK SUITE BRIGHTON
BRIGHTON ROCK PRESENT
George Thorogood
AND THE DESTROYERS
TUESDAY 13th MARCH 8·00p.m.
Tickets £1.60 advance from Virgin & usual agents

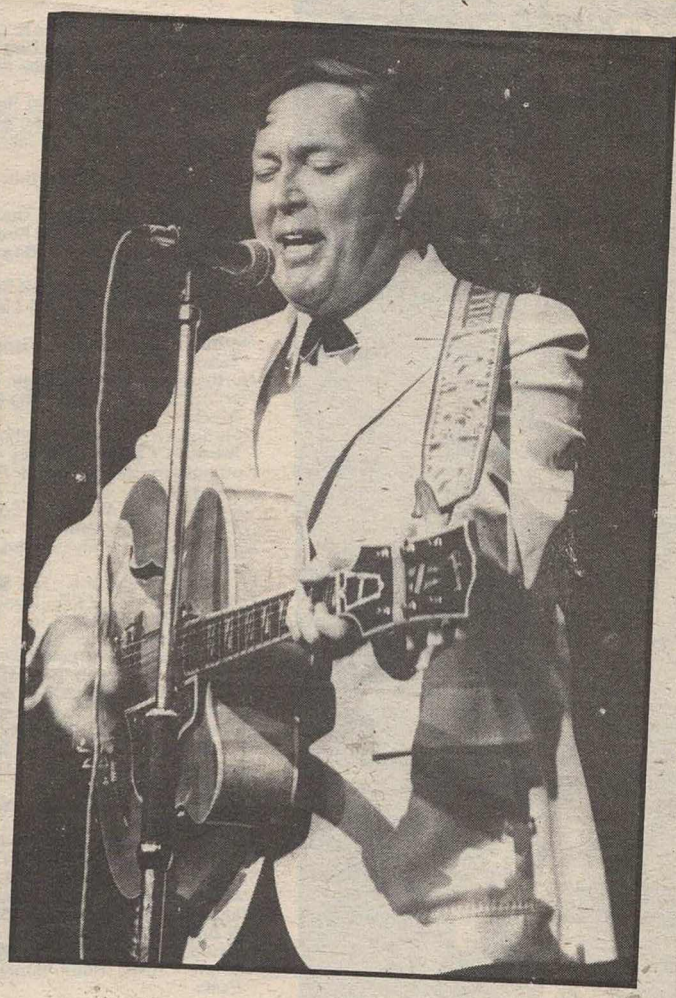
UNIT ONE, Whitehall Rd, Uxbridge
8 pm FRIDAY 9 MARCH 50p
BETWEEN PICTURES

TRIAD
Bishops Stortford 56333

Friday March 5th, 8 pm
KANGAROO ALLEY
Saturday March 10th, 8 pm
TEEN BEATS
Sunday March 11th, noon
TRACKS
Tuesday March 13th, 8 pm
BELT 'N' BRACES BAND
Wednesday March 14th, 8 pm
TRAIN SPOTTERS
Free admission. Licensed bars.







No, it ain't 'The Good Old Days'! It's . . .

NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

YES FOLKS, it's veterans' week on the gig circuit — with Johnny Cash, Bo Diddley and Uncle Bill Haley and all. And that's not meant in any detrimental sense. After all, they've stood the test of time, they're all kingpins in their own spheres, and it's doubtful whether many of today's new stars will last even half as long!

● ***JOHNNY CASH*** *(pictured above left) is here with his full touring show, including wife June, The Carter Family and The Tennessee Three. They'll all be walking the line at Brighton on Sunday, then play a string of five nights at London's Wembley Arena from Monday, with more gigs to come next week.*

● ***BO DIDDLEY*** *(centre) flies in to headline a one-off London concert at the Lyceum on Sunday, supported by rockabilly king Ray Campi and Britain's own Whirlwind.*

● ***BILL HALEY*** *(right) & The Comets are back in the UK for an extensive tour, and they'll be rocking round the clock at London Southgate (Thursday), Bournemouth (Saturday), Bristol (Sunday), Paignton (Monday) and Harrogate (Wednesday), with more to follow. Support acts are British rock revival bands The Wild Angels and Flying Saucers.*

Also starting tours this week are:

● ***TINA TURNER,*** *who almost comes into the veteran category herself, though you'd never know it from the excitement and electricity she generates. The older she gets, the more clothes she sheds — as you'll doubtless be able to witness when she kicks off a British tour at Poole (Sunday) and Manchester (Wednesday).*

● ***RALPH McTELL*** *hardly qualifies as a veteran, though he seems to have been going for more years than we care to remember. But he's always good value for money, and there's unlikely to be an empty seat in the house when he begins his latest trek at Ipswich (Friday), Southend (Sunday), Paignton (Tuesday) and Poole (Wednesday).*

● ***GEORGE THOROGOOD*** *& The Destroyers aren't particularly long in the tooth, though it could be argued that their music has a certain vintage quality. They return to the UK this week and start their travels at Leicester (Saturday) and Brighton (Tuesday).*

Thursday

Basildon Double Six: **The Piranhas**
Bath University: **Steve Gibbons Band**
Birmingham Barbarella's: **The Undertones/The Squares**
Birmingham Mayfair Ballroom: **U.K.**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Special Clinic**
Birmingham Odeon: **Joan Armatrading-/George Duke Band**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Orphan**
Birmingham The Bell: **The Clerks**
Brighton Alhambra: **Fan Club**
Brighton Buccaneer: **Stunshot**
Brighton Dome: **Uriah Heep/Bram Tchaikovsky**
Bristol Polytechnic: **Pressure Shocks**
Burntwood Troubadour: **The Amazing Dark Horse**
Camberley Civic Hall: **Jeremy Taylor**
Colwyn Bay Dixieland Showbar: **Martha Reeves & The Vandellas**
Coventry Lanchester Polytechnic: **Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders/Lew Lewis Reformer**
Coventry Ryton Bridge Hotel: **Atlas**
Coventry Theatre: **Slim Whitman**
Crediton Market House: **Red Tape**
Dublin Stadium: **Chris De Burgh/ Catherine Howe**
Eastbourne Congress Theatre: **Lou Rawls**
Exeter Routes: **N.W.10**
Glasgow Apollo Centre: **Graham Parker & The Rumour**
Glasgow Strathclyde University: **Magazine**
Gosport Sultan Club: **Liquid Gold**
Halesowen Tiffany's: **Ocean Boulevard**
High Wycombe Nags Head: **The Alligators**
Kenilworth Priory Hall: **Urge**
Leeds Fan Club: **The Skids**
Leeds Polytechnic: **Wild Horses**
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: **John Hedley Haggett Band**
Leicester De Montfort Hall: **Bill Nelson's Red Noise**
Liverpool Eric's: **The Smirks/John Dowie**
Liverpool (Wallasey) Dale Inn: **Amsterdam**
London Camden Brecknock: **Scarecrow**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Gonzalez**
London Camden Music Machine: **Eric Bell Band/The Jags**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Dog Watch**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Young Bucks**
London Epping Folk Club: **Robin Dransfield**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Ex-Directory**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Maddoo**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Flys**
London Kennington The Cricketers: **Manyana**
London Kensington De Villiers Bar: **Gold Dust Twins**
London Kensington The Nashville: **The Pretenders/Neon**
London Knightsbridge Pizza on the Park: **Martin Taylor/Ike Isaacs**
London Marquee Club: **Straight 8**
London Maunkberry's: **Midnight News**
London North Polytechnic Ladbroke House: **Soulyard/The Spoilsports**
London Nort-East Polytechnic: **The Crooks**
London Old Kent Rd. Thomas A'Beckett: **Tour De Force**
London Rainbow Theatre: **Average White Band/Inner Circle**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Tony Coe Quartet**
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: **Bill Haley & The Comets/Freddie Cannon**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Hong Kong Toys**
London Tottenham The Spurs: **The Rest**
London Waterloo Young Vic Theatre: **Bobb Pegg**
London W10 Acklam Hall: **The Psychedelic Furs**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Darts**
Mansfield Miners Club: **Tarot**
Melton Mowbray Painted Lady: **Chaser**
New Brighton Grand Hotel: **Gotham City Swing Band**
Newcastle Guildhall: **Exodus/Crawling Chaos**
Norwich Boogie House: **The Cure**
Norwich Whites: **Danny & The Dressmakers/The Astronauts/Suze da Blooz etc.**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Hormones**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Lap Region**
Nottingham The Bodega: **Art Failure**
Oxford Corn Dolly: **Anniversary**
Oxford Polytechnic: **Simon Townshend Band**
Plymouth Metro: **Punishment of Luxury**
Portsmouth Locarno: **The Pop Group/Alternative TV/Linton Kwesi Johnson**
Poynton Folk Centre: **Iain Mackintosh-/Titanic**
Sheffield University Union: **Peter Bond**
Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic: **Supercharge**
Stirling MacRobert Centre: **George Melly & The Feetwarmers**
Warkden Pembroke Halls: **Billy Ocean**
Wellingborough Fir tree Ballroom: **Chris Barber Band**
Worthing Balmoral Bar: **Airport**

Friday

Bath Pavilion: **Billy Connolly**
Birmingham Barbarella's: **The Skids**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Bright Eyes**
Birmingham Elizabethan Days: **Bad Earth**
Birmingham Odeon: **Joan Armatrading / George Duke Band**
Birmingham Polytechnic: **'Be Limp' Package Tour**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Spitfire**
Blackpool Norbreck Castle: **Gotham City Swing Band**
Bournemouth Winter Gardens: **Uriah Heep / Bram Tchaikovsky**
Bradford University: **Supercharge**
Brighton Alhambra: **Nightrider**
Brighton Dome: **Darts**
Bristol University: **Roger Chapman & The Shortlist**
Chester Arts Centre: **Thunder Boots**
Chiddingly Six Bells: **The Dials**
Colchester Embassy Suite: **Matchbox**
Colchester Essex University: **Danny & The Dressmakers / Wilful Damage / Alternative TV / The Astronauts etc.**
Crawley College: **The Bishops**
Cromer West Runton Pavilion: **The Only Ones**
Dublin Stadium: **Chris De Burgh / Catherine Howe**
Dudley J.B.'s Club: **The Flys**
Durham University: **Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders / Lew Lewis Reformer**
Erskine Park Mains Theatre: **George Melly & The Feetwarmers**
Harrow College of Higher Education: **Eric Bell Band**
Hayes Alfred Beck Centre: **Chris Barber Band**
High Wycombe Bucks College of Higher Education: **Neon Hearts**
Hull College: **Magazine**
Ipswich Corn Exchange: **Ralph McTell**
Kettering Windmill Club: **The Bearshank Band**
Kirklevington Country Club: **Fischer-Z**
Knaresborough Folk Club: **Somerville Gentlemans Band**
Lancaster University: **Tour De Force**
Leeds University Union: **John Hedley Haggett Band**
Leeds Viva Wine Bar **Red Eye**
Liverpool Eric's: **Joe Jackson Band**
Liverpool University: **Eddie & The Hot Rods / The Members**
London Acton Kings Head: **Paz**
London Camden Brecknock: **Roger The Cat**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Bobby Henry**
London Camden Dublin Castle: **ABC**
London Camden Southampton Arms: **Jellyroll Blues Band**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Jackie Lynton's Happy Days**
London Central Polytechnic: **The Ruts**
London Covent Garden Basement Club: **L360 / Blancmange**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Inmates**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Rule The Roost**
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: **The Reds / The Tronics**
London Hounslow Isleworth Polytechnic: **The Cure**
London Kensington The Nashville: **The Strangeways**
London Kentish Town North Polytechnic: **The Scottish Monos**
London Manor Park Ruskin Arms: **Jerry The Ferret**
London Marquee Club: **The Extras / Car Crash**
London Paddington Western Counties: **First Aid**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Grieg & Nigel's Filk and Blues Night**
London Rainbow Theatre: **Average White Band / Inner Circle**
London School of Economics: **Tennis Shoes**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Tony Coe Quartet**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Dog Watch**
London Strand King's College: **Straight 8**
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **Kossaga**
London Victoria The Venue: **Steve Gibbons Band**
London Waterloo Young Vic Theatre: **Bob Pegg**
London Wembley Arena: **Bad Company**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **The Lightning Raiders / Reaction**
London W.1 Portman hotel: **Spinning Wheel**
London W.10 Acklam Hall: **Carol Grimes Band / Phil Ram / Almost Brothers**
London W.C.2 Africa Centre: **The Psychedic Furs**
Luton Technical College: **Radio Stars**
Manchester New Century Hall: **Billy Ocean**
Manchester The Factory: **Punishment Of Luxury / The Tunes**
Melton Mowbray Painted Lady: **Light Of The World**
Newcastle Polytechnic: **The Pirates**
Newport The Village: **The Doll**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Last Call**
Nottingham Sandpiper: **Medium Medium / The Distributors**
Nottingham University: **Bethnal**
Oxford Co-op Hall: **N.W.10**
Oxford Oranges & Lemons: **Rank**
Oxford New Theatre: **Slim Whitman**
Plymouth Polytechnic: **The Fans**
Retford Porterhouse: **The Undertones / The Squares**
Ripley Cock Hotel: **Tarot**
Rugby Emmaline's: **Capital Letters**
Sheffield Polytechnic: **Gong**
Southampton Totton College: **The Underdogs**
Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic: **The Smirks**
Swindon Brunel Rooms: **Ray Campi & The Rockabilly Rebels**
Uxbridge Brunel University: **Wild Horses**
Wakefield Unity Hall: **The Movies**
Winchester King Alfred College: **Thieves Like Us**
Wolverhampton Lafayette: **Stiff Little Fingers / Essential Logic / Robert Rental & the Normal**

Saturday

Bangor University: **Gong**
Barrow Rugby Club: **Rokotto**
Bilston Rising Star: **Pressure Shocks**
Birmingham Barbarella's: **Slade**
Birmingham Bogarts: **Slender Thread**
Birmingham Fighting Cocks: **Mosiah**
Birmingham (Kings Heath) Hare & Hounds: **Cocky**
Birmingham National Exhibition Centre: **Joan Armatrading / George Duke Band**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **School Sports**
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: **Teen Beats**
Bognor Esplanade Theatre: **Chris Barber Band**
Bolton Institute of Technology: **The Accelerators**
Bournemouth Winter Gardens: **Bill Haley & The Comets / Flying Saucers / The Wild Angels**
Bracknell Bridge House: **Thieves Like Us**
Brighton Alhambra: **Stunshot**
Bristol Crown Cellar Bar: **The Wild Beasts**
Bristol Polytechnic: **Stan Arnold Combo**
Burntisland Half Circle: **George Melly & The Feetwarmers**
Carlisle Cosmo Club: **Billy Ocean**
Cheltenham Plough Inn: **The Cure**
Colchester Essex University: **The Pretenders / John Cooper Clarke**
Cromer West Runtok Pavilion: **90° Inclusive**
Doncaster The Mona: **Tarot**
Dublin Stadium: **Chris De Burgh / Catherine Howe**
Dudley J.B.'s Club: **The Undertones / The Squares**
Eastbourne Cavalier: **Nightrider**
Egremont Tow Bar Inn: **The Motels**
Folkestone Leas Cliff Hall: **Gillan**
Glasgow Strathclyde University: **Eddie & The Hot Rods / The Members**
Glasgow University: **The Pirates / Supercharge**
Hitchin College: **Wild Horses**
Huddersfield Polytechnic: **Magazine**
Hull University: **The Only Ones**
Lancaster University: **Graham Parker & The Rumour**
Leeds Fforde Green Hotel: **Bilbo**
Leeds Haddon Hall: **John Hedley Haggett Band**
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: **Ethel The Frog**
Leeds Staging Post: **The City Limits**
Leeds Viva Wine Bar: **Howard Ellis Band**
Leicester University: **George Thorogood & The Destroyers / Ray Campi & The Rockabilly Rebels**
Lincoln Brant Road Club: **Strange Days**
Liverpool Empire Theatre: **Bill Nelson's Red Noise**
Liverpool Eric's: **Punishment Of Luxury**
Liverpool The Masonic: **Tontrix**
London Acton Windmill: **Dog Watch**
London Camden Brecknock: **Tennis Shoes**
London Camden Dingwalls: **The Young Bucks / The Scottish Monos**
London Camden Electric Ballroom: **Stiff Little Fingers / Essential Logic / Robert Rental & The Normal**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Zaine Griff**
London Chelsea College: **Neo**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Soft Boys**
London Deptford Kings Head: **The Monitors**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Ricky Cool & The Icebergs**
London Hackney Adam & Eve: **Matchbox**
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: **Neon / The Lightning Raiders**
London Kensington The Nashville: **The Bishops / The Bombers**
London Kilburn Gaumont State Theatre: **The Bothy Band**
London Kingsbury Bandwagon: **Samson**
London Marquee Club: **Rule The Roost**
London Notting Hill Old Swan: **Fast Livin'**
London Queen Mary College: **Bethnal**
London Rainbow Theatre: **Darts**
London Regent's Park Cecil Sharp House: **Cyril Tawney**
London School of Economics: **Black Slate / The Flys / Rotavators**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Doug Richford Quartet**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Big Chief**
London University College: **Blank Space**
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **Kossaga**
London Victoria The Venue: **Gonzalez / The Voice Squad / Dana Gillespie**
London Wembley Arena: **Bad Company**
London Westbourne Park Meanwhile Gardens: **Danny & The Dressmakers / Wil-**

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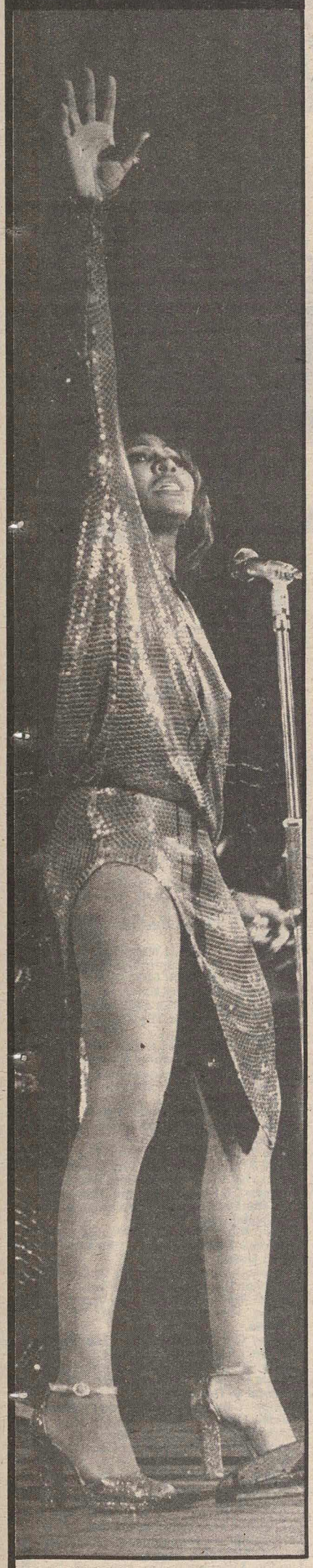
Gig Guide continued



TINA TURNER

ful Damage / Vince Pie & The Crumbs / The Astronauts / The Dog Ends / Suze da Blooz / Blank Space / Funboy Five etc.
London West Hampstead Railway Hotel: **School Bullies & special guests**
London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic: **London Zoo**
Luton College of Further Education: **N.W.10**
Manchester Polytechnic: **The Pop Group / Alternative TV / Linton Kwesi Johnson**
Manchester University: **Roger Chapman & The Shortlist**
Matlock Pavilion: **Eric Bell Band**
Melton Mowbray Painted Lady: **Light Of The World**
Northampton County Ground: **Radio Stars**
Northampton Nene College: **U.K. Subs**
Norwich Boogie House: **The Smirks / Too Much**
Nottingham Club Malibu: **Medium Medium / Snoots / Gaffa**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Outward Band**
Oxford College of Further Education: **'Be Limp' Package Tour**
Oxford Corn Dolly: **John Grimaldi's Cheap Flights**
Plymouth Polytechnic: **The Skids**
Plymouth St. Mark's College: **Writz**
Polgooth The Polgooth Inn: **The Bricks**
Poole Brewers Arms: **Tours**
Poole Wessex Hall: **Lou Rawls**
Reading Target Club: **Knuckles**
Retford Porterhouse: **Chas & Dave**
Sheffield City Hall: **Van Morrison**
Shrewsbury Music Hall: **Billy Connolly**
Slough Community Centre: **Inner Circle**
Southampton University: **Landscape / Sniff 'n' The Tears**
Southend Top Alex: **Steve Hooker's Vampire Lovers**
Southport Theatre: **Slim Whitman**
St Albans Horn of Plenty: **64 Spoons**
Sunderland Polytechnic: **Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders / Lew Lewis Reformer**
Walsall Pelsall Community Centre: **Jaqui & Bridie / Malfunction**
Watford Mex's Palace: **The Notion**
Wishaw Crown Hotel (lunchtime): **The Pests**

Sunday

Bakewell Monsal Head: **Vesuvius**
Birmingham Barbarella's: **Ocean Boulevard**
Birmingham Odeon: **Van Morrison**
Birmingham Polytechnic: **Eric Bell Band**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Prina Donna**
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: **Tracks**
Brighton Alhambra: **The Piranhas**
Bristol Colston Hall: **Bill Haley & The Comets/Flying Saucers/The Wild Angels**
Brighton The Centre: **The Johnny Cash Show**
Bromley The Northover (Lunchtime): **Bill Scott & Ian Ellis**
Chelmsford Chancellor Hall: **The Undertones/The Squares**
Chester Gateway Theatre: **Billy Connolly**
Crawley White Knight: **The Little Jimmies**
Croydon Greyhound: **Inner Circle**
Dumfries Stagecoach: **The Pirates**
Exeter University: **Red Tape**
Haywards Heath Clair Hall: **Midnite Follies Orchestra**
Horncastle Bull Hotel: **Foggy**
Hull Groucho's Place: **Gotham City Swing Band**
Leeds University: **Graham Parker & The Rumour**
Leeds Viva Wine Bar: **Ethel The Frog**
London Battersea Nags Head: **Jugular Vein**
London Camden Brecknock: **Scarecrow**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Downliners Sect**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Remus Down Boulevard**
London Charing Cross Duke of Buckingham: **The Invisibles (for four days)**
London Chiswick John Bull: **First Aid**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Psychedlic Furs**
London East Ham Ruskin Arms: **Dog Watch**
London Finchley Torrington: **Bowles Bros Band**
London Kensington The Nashville: **The Scottish Monos**
London Marquee Club: **The Cure/Fashion**
London Oxford Street 100 Club: **Margie Evans**
London Palladium: **Lou Rawls**
London Peckham Montpelier (lunchtime): **Blue Moon**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Johnny Parker**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Local Operator/Lammagyre**
London Strand Lyceum Ballroom: **Bo Diddley/Ray Campi & The Rockabilly Rebels/Whirlwind**
London Victoria The Venue: **Gong**
London Wembley Arena: **Bad Company**
London W.I. Portman Hotel (lunchtime): **Susannah McCorkle/Keith Ingham Trio**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Bill Nelson's Red Noise**
Manchester Midland Hotel: **Taux**
Mold Theatre Clwyd: **Chris Barber Band**
Newquay Central Hotel: **The Winners**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Medium Medium**
Nottingham Theatre Royal: **Slim Whitman**
Poole Arts Centre: **Tina Turner**
Poynton Folk Centre: **Waterfall/Terry Walsh**
Reading Target Club: **Moonraker**
Ringwood Elm Tree: **Thieves Like Us**
Southampton Totton Cutty Wren Club: **Martin Carter & Graham Jones**
Southend Cliffs Pavilion: **Ralph McTell**
Walsall Dirty Duck (lunchtime): **The Amazing Dark Horse**
Windsor Blazes: **Martha Reeves & The Vandellas (for three days)**

RALPH McTELL

Monday

Birmingham Barrie Organ: **Fashion**
Birmingham Drakes Drum: **Ocean Boulevard**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Video**
Blackpool Ruffles: **Mistress**
Bradford Metro Inn: **Ethel The Frog/Tarot**
Bristol Colston Hall: **Graham Parker & The Rumour**
Bude Bullers Arms Hotel: **Chris Barber Band**
Burslem Queen's Theatre: **Billy Connolly**
Cambridge Union Debating Chambers: **The Soft Boys**
Edinburgh Tiffany's: **The Pirates**
Ilford Cauliflower Hotel: **Original East Side Stompers**
Leeds (Yeadon) The Peacock: **Luigi & Da Boys**
Leicester De Montfort Hall: **Van Morrison**
Leicester University: **The Smirks**
Liverpool The Crown: **The Clerks**
London Camden Brecknock: **Urchin**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Ray Campi & The Rockabilly Rebels**
London Camden Music Machine: **Straight 8**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **School Bullies/The Tickets**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Jags/Joe Public**
London East Ham Ruskin Arms: **The Injections**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **The Scottish Monos**
London Old Brompton Rd. Troubadour: **Nolan Walsh & Friends**
London Paddington Western Counties: **The Flexible Dustbins**
London Putney Half Moon: **Sonja Kristina**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Penny Royal**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Strangeways/L7**
London Talk Of The Town: **The Drifters (for two weeks)**
London Wembley Arena: **Joan Armatrading/George Duke Band**
London Wembley Conference Centre: **The Johnny Cash Show**
London West Hampstead Railway Hotel: **The Angelic Upstarts/The Indicators**
London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic: **The Red Lights**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Lou Rawls**
Manchester Band on the Wall: **The Out**
Milton Keynes Crawford club: **The Undertones**
Newcastle City Hall: **Bill Nelson's Red Noise**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Party**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gwaihir**
Oxford Corn Dolly: **Too Much**
Paignton Festival Theatre: **Bill Haley & The Comets/Flying Saucers/The Wild Angels**
Petersfield White Horse: **Nightrider**
Preston Peartree: **Gotham City Swing Band**
Rayleigh Crocs: **Matchbox**
Sheffield City Hall: **The Bothy Band**
Stoke Jollees: **Slim Whitman**
Trowbridge Village Pump: **Martin Carter & Graham Jones**

Tuesday

Birmingham Fighting Cocks: **Brujo**
Birmihgham Mercat Cross: **Cartoons**
Birmihgham Railway Hotel: **Speed Limit**
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: **Belt & Braces Band**
Brighton Top Rank: **George Thorogood & The Destroyers / Ray Campi & The Rockabilly Rebels**
Canterbury Kent University: **Chas & Dave**
Derby Assembly Hall: **Van Morrison**
Durham University: **The Only Ones**
Eastbourne (Pevensey) Star Inn: **Nightrider**
Exeter University: **Graham Parker & The Rumour**
Fleet Fox & Honds: **John The Fish**
Greenock Victorian Carriage: **The Motels**
Leicester University: **Gong**
London Camden Brecknock: **Little Egypt**
London Camden Dingwalls: **The Bombers / Mistress / The Accelerators**
London Camden Music Machine: **Strangeways**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Lew Lewis Reformer**
London Clapham Clockhouse: **The Cannibals**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **White Lightning**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Billy Ocean**
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: **Skin Deep**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Showbiz Kidz / Nicky & The Dots**
London Marquee Club: **Radio Stars**
London Maunkberry's: **Freddie & The Square Pegs**
London Paddington Western Counties: **Thieves Like Us**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Deanery Quartet**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Split Screens / General Accident**

GEORGE THOROGOOD

London Strand Lyceum Ballroom: **Roger Chapman & The Shortlist**
London Wembley Arena: **Joan Armatrading / George Duke Band**
London Wembley Conference Centre: **The Johnny Cash Show**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **The Transmitters / The Decorators / Magnificent Seven**
London Woolwich Tramshed: **Samson**
Maidstone College of Art: **The Lightning Raiders**
Manchester Band on the Wall: **Joy Division**
Manchester Free Trade Hall: **The Bothy Band**
Manchester Polytechnic: **Bethnal**
Northampton Spinney Hill Hall: **Midnite Follies Orchestra**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gaffa**
Oldham Romeo & Juliet's: **Liquid Gold**
Oxford Corn Dolly: **The Carpettes**
Oxford Polytechnic: **The Cure**
Paignton Festival Theatre: **Ralph McTell**
Portsmouth Polytechnic: **The Undertones / The Squares**
Sheffield City Hall: **Bill Nelson's Red Noise**
Sheffield Limit Club: **Joe Jackson Band / The Tunes**
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: **Bad Company**
Southport Theatre: **Billy Connolly**
Truro Pen Air School: **Chris Barber Band**
Walsall Dirty Duck: **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Wednesday

Altrincham Bowden Vale Club: **Joy Division**
Bexhill De La Warr Pavilion: **Chris Barber Band**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Brujo**
Birmingham Bogarts: **Mean Street Dealers**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Rainmaker**
Birmingham (Yardley) Bulls Head: **Roses**
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: **Train Spotters**
Blackburn King George Hall: **Billy Connolly**
Bradford St. George's Hall: **Bill Nelson's Red Noise**
Bradford University: **Jonathan Richman**
Carshalton St. Helier Arms: **Ramrod**
Cheltenham Plough Inn: **Roadsters**
Chester Arts Centre: **Mike Osbourne Quintet**
Coventry Warwich University: **Martin Carter & Graham Jones**
Derby Old Bell Hotel: **Snoots**
Derby Sadie's: **Gaffa**
Glenrothes Rothes Arms Hotel: **The Freeze**
Harrogate Royal Hall: **Bill Haley & The Comets/Flying Saucers/The Wild Angels**
Hazel Grove Community Centre: **Pure Product**
Helensburgh Trident Club: **Rokotto**
Hemel Hempstead Pavilion: **The Bothy Band**
Leeds University: **The Tunes**
Liverpool The Masonic: **The Accelerators**
Liverpool Univeristy: **Gong**
London Camden Brecknock: **White Lightning**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Tribesman**
London Camden Dublin Castle: **X-Films**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Warm Jets**
London Chelsea Arts College: **The Red Lights**
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: **The Psychedelic Furs**
London Knightsbridge The Grove: **Free Beer**
London Marquee Club: **The Undertones/The Squares**
London Maunkberry's: **Eric Roberts**
London Paddington Western Counties: **Too Much**
London Peckham Montpelier: **Blue Moon**
London Southall White Hart: **Ray Campi & The Rockabilly Rebels**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Staa Marx/F.U.X.**
London Wembley Conference Centre: **The Johnny Cash Show**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **The Specials/KHz**
London Wimbledon F.C. Nelson's Club: **Southside**
London W.1 Gulliver's: **Billy Ocean**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Tina Turner**
Margate Bowlers Arms: **The Heroes**
Newport Stowaway Club: **N.W.10/Gotham City Swing Band**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Gwaihir**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Berlin**
Oldham Romeo & Juliet's: **Liquid Gold**
Plymouth Woods Centre: **U.K. Subs**
Poole Arts Centre: **Ralph McTell**
Rayleigh Crocs: **The Records**
Reading University: **Pressure Shocks**
Sheffield Polytechnic: **Bethnal**
Sheffield University Union: **Artery/Stunt Kites**
Southampton Kingsland Hall: **The Underdogs**
Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic: **The Skids**
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York Revolution: **The Smirks**

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Mar. 31 BUZZCOCKS
Apr. 1 MOTORHEAD
Apr. 1/2 JOHN DENVER
Apr. 2 RALPH McTELL
Apr. 2/3 GRAHAM PARKER & THE RUMOUR
Apr. 4 JEAN LUC—PONTY
Apr. 10 LOU REED
Apr. 12 JAPAN
Apr. 12 RENAISSANCE
Apr. 15 PLANXTY
Apr. 16/18 KATE BUSH
Apr. 19 STYLISTICS
Apr. 19/21 DUSTY SPRINGFIELD
Apr. 20 JOHN MILES
Apr. 21 PENETRATION
Apr. 22/28 NEIL SEDAKA
Apr. 26/27 NATALIE COLE
Apr. 28/29 MIKE OLDFIELD
Apr. 29 STYLISTICS
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Thursday March 8th
CANNING TOWN
Bridge House

Saturday March 10th
ACTON
Windmill

Sunday March 11th
EAST HAM
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PEGASUS
109 GREEN LANES, N.16

Thurs March 8th — Free
"SECRET AFFAIR" GENEVIEVE
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IN BRITAIN

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Thursday March 15th at 8.30 pm

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Shouldn't be allowed at the
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Tuesday, March 13th
Debut single available soon on Local Records
Comic Book Hero c/w Casualty of Love
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with
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Friday March 23rd at the London College of Printing
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Friday March 9th
Windsor Castle, Harrow Road
Late Bar — Admission £1.00

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Approach Road, New Barnet (beside BR New Barnet)

Thursday, March 8th
DAVID BLOSSE BAND
Friday, March 9th
BACKLASH
Saturday, March 10th
THE LATEST MODEL
Sunday, March 11th
REDNITE
Tuesday, March 13th
SCANDAL

THE Venue
160 VICTORIA ST, SW1
(opp Victoria Tube station)
01-834 5500

Friday, March 9th
STEVE GIBBONS
Doors open 7pm & 11pm
Show times 9pm and 12pm £3

Saturday, March 10th
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VOICE SQUAD
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Extra special night 7pm-3am. £3

Sunday, March 11th
Pierre Moerlen's
GONG
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Doors open 7pm, show time 8.30pm. £3

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DAVID SANCIOUS
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Doors open 7pm, show time 9pm. £3

Coming gigs: Dan Hicks, Percy Sledge, Jim Capaldi, Andrea True Connection, Detroit Emeralds

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DUNSTABLE, QUEENSWAY (Civic) HALL
Sunday March 18th at 7.30pm
Only public Home Counties appearence . . .
GORDON GILTRAP
+ John Glover Band
Bar Food
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The Convertable . . .
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EVERYTHING IS GREAT *THE HIT SINGLE FROM* INNER CIRCLE

ISLAND
WIP 6472

ON THE TOWN

EARTH, WIND & levitating bassist: who dat up dere sayin' who dat down dere? Pic CHRIS HORLER

Yes, yes—but were they any good?

Earth, Wind And Fire

Wembley Arena

WOW!!! Sheer excellence!!! You weren't there? You *are* square!!! (you thought it was the other way round? You still living to those snobby chic guidelines? Forget it!) The flamboyant theatre and infinite joy of Earth, Wind And Fire!!! You expect me to write about it all?

You get highlights — but you get nothing that captures the momentous jaunty kitsch ecstasy of this big wild show. The word I suppose is *spectacle,* but that isn't nearly enough.

Soul and such shows can be mundane and predictable — expensive packages of glitter and choreography; loud, professional, inflexible routines; American success-stories making rare glossy appearances of cursory consolidation, effortlessly and safely gathering fervoured responses. No way did EW&F take it easy or contain their true selves, as they could have done with no real disgrace.

They worked hard and skilfully. Not only were there camp, comic costumes, preposterous and sensational props and a beautifully-balanced sound, (all immaculately prepared), but the music (remember that?) was superbly and stylishly played. And you knew that behind the inevitable barrage of wide, self-mocking grins was some real life and commitment.

They happily supplied natural, spontaneous enthusiasm and excitement. Their entertainment was a delightful balance of vulgarity, verve and vigour. Everything you expect from a pop extravaganza — exaggerate as much as you want — and you still won't come close to understanding the force and fun of this brilliant, breathtaking show. Didn't know where to look, where to listen.

So, things had settled in the oddly empty press and freebie section at the left side of the stage, the Wingfields and Peebles had arrived making me feel even more out of "place", and behind me the whistles reached a crescendo.

What appeared to be two dozen ludicrously clad dummies (like extras from a Fairbanks Jr. *Sinbad* movie) descended — poured down from — a neat central structure that accommodated a huge square bank of keyboards and a surprisingly-modest drum kit.

For the next two hours, a perfectly paced, consistent, insistent exhibition of fluid fancy dance music, as lively as the band's movement, as gaudy and varied as the musicians' costumes — take a look at a couple of the flamboyant, multi-coloured rig-outs, all flash, brash, flowing and tight, and you got the music. Not a music that you can label, or that needs a label — just a style. For two hours, a non-stop speedy conveyance of favourites — 'Fantasy', 'Shining Star', 'Got To Get You Into My Life' — sending both audience and band into raptures.

The collective musical effect is made up of sections of subtle yet abandoned sounds inspiringly arranged and deftly fitted together. A four / five piece brass section sweetly blasted out blistering, punctuating jazz horn; rhythm guitar contributed correct and durable r&b support; lead guitar played loose, stinging rock precision; the bass was excitable and gutsy; pounding drums were beautifully separated and projected; there was omnipresent clattering, pattering percussion; and abrasive, assertive keyboard foundation. It's just a continual attack, with solos never really interrupting the assault; plus three voices capable of deep'n'high'n'bending, unwaveringly emphatic singing.

'Magic Mind' went through a number of taut, breathless brass bursts, no one knowing when to stop, each section of the collective teasing each other, until they pushed through a tingling climax. Later, a long compelling series of fine, often great solo spots was climaxed histrionically with a bass solo in which all the well-worn devices were rejuvenated in a hysterical *tour-de-farce,* positively levitating, no less.

Such trivial but effective trickery was surpassed at the finale of the show. The band fell into a significant chugging groove, and a group of sophisticatedly-dressed 'alien' glided on stage. One by one, half the group climbed up into a small pyramid perched above the keyboards, cheerfully shaking hands with the 'alien', until six of them were apparently squeezed into the box. The pyramid slowly ascended, dramatically disintegrated 25 feet up in the air, and six aliens on stage removed their helmets. Yeah, twas the missing member. 'Twas never thus in *Close Encounters.*

It sounds silly (it was really, and expensive), but in the context of the extravaganza this was the only suitable way to end it all.

Only black spot? When one of the back-up singers proclaimed:

"Music is our gift, and we give it to you. And it's no good without you. It's a giving-receiving type situation."

Gak! I laughed some more, but not really cruelly. That's the thing about EW&F, you laugh with them, for them, at them, knowing that underneath it all their musical dexterity and conviction cannot be denied. They are great fun. The toes are still twitching; the grins are still intact. If they come back, be ready to queue.

Paul Morley

JJ by ROB HALL

Joe Jackson

Leeds

The eight-foot-six Neurotic Stockbroker look just had to reckon sooner or later, but even though he's been squaring-off all his life, spiv rocker Joe Jackson now has the kind of image which not even a seasoned actor could contrive. Cabaret in Portsmouth must do something for a man.

In the case of Jackson, more has been revived than the polka dot.

Keeled over and automatically combing his hair on the condensation stalactites which have a tendency to proliferate at the Fan Club on nights like this, Jackson spewed his vitriolic raps over an audience of punters barely ready for the pin-striped phenomenon who sweated, swigged pils and executed open-heart surgery for their perusal.

'One More Time', a sure-fire opener sung in sure-fire manic style (cf. Graham Parker) paved the way here for a brutally fast-moving 50-minute set which easily trashed the Leeds all-comers' record. Fronting a band whose frugality more or less defines 'minimalism', contender Jackson gets through his fair share of hang-ups in a gig, but nothing here (not even a hiccupping fire siren) could prevent him from getting everything out of his system. Spoken preambles spotlighted the humourist communicator in Jackson: "I quit the polka dots (for horizontal stripes) because the *NME* don't like them. I wouldn't know what to wear if it wasn't for them," while the keen, terse lyrics of 'Is She Really Going Out With Him?' (cf. Steve Miller), dedicated to Rick Nielsen and Cheap Trick who he'd just seen up the road, 'Look Sharp', 'Fools In Love' and (hey Joe, what you doin' with that pun?) 'Happy Loving Couples' (cf. Elvis Costello) ensured that nobody left thinking Jackson was just a joker.

The unrecorded 'I'm The Man' promised even more, possessing a similar intensity to the 'Look Sharp' collection', but with a much more obviously commercial structure and feel — and featuring a vocal fade-out which one dares Jackson to record: "I was last year's model, baby, and I'm going to be next year's too." Very camp, very cocky. But still cool.

Introducing the band "because they're so good," Jackson gives credit where due. Pirouetting and generally flipping out behind him, guitarist Gary Sanford and bassist Graham Maby provide a complementary bizarrerie as an oddball backdrop to Jacko's frenzied stoicism. The no-superfluous-action 3-D vista is competitive, especially if and when you could also see drummer Dave Houghton — a physical impossibility not exclusive to myself.

Jackson's raw harp (featuring prominently on 'The Fever', the flip of the single) and boogie electric piano (notably on 'Ain't That A Shame') were successful, if a little gratuitous. They seemed conclusive indications that Jackson (unwisely?) intends to take the scope of his talents to the outer reaches of endless possibility.

But essentially, Jackson knows where he's going (you can't put a good spiv down), and hopefully, most similarities with other rock artistes past, present, living or dead, are subconscious rip-offs. They told you J.J. was going to be BIG, and you suckers, you believed them.

This time around, though, nobody loses: if Jackson has seemed to fall into the 'hype' bracket, then this at least is one hype we can all use.

Emma Ruth

Bobby Henry

Rock Garden

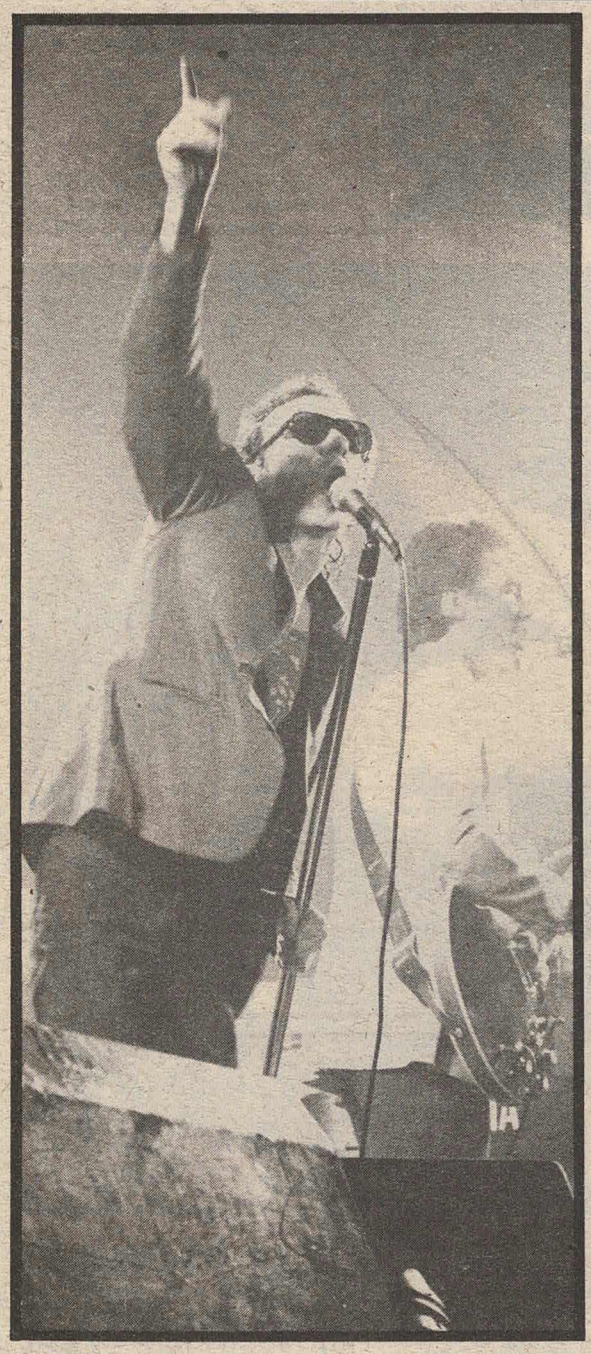
With an undistinguished single under his belt ('Headcase'), Bobby Henry — rock 'n' roller from north of the border — made a premature assault on a London audience with moderate success.

A twin-guitar front of Henry and Rob Lamb set the musical pattern on the upper level, while Matthew Seligman (bass), and drummer Dave Wickham provided a tight beat. Sub-NY Dolls material vied with riot-rock to produce a youthful, occasionally memorable raw power.

'Can't Find Girls' effectively utilised the ubiquitous 'Sweet Jane' riff, while 'Stolen Cars' spewed Flamin' Groovies' guitar motifs. A bouncing bass underpinning a scatter-gun riff hauled 'Haunted By You' out of the morass of mediocrity, but their weak material undermined their obvious competence.

If you dig rock 'n' roll, the chances are you'll dance to at least some of the set.

Neil Norman



PARKER assigns blame. Pic PENNIE SMITH

Somewhere, the edge went AWOL

Graham Parker and The Rumour

Belfast

There were some of the most infuriating and formularised contrivances that one associates with large scale rock gigs acting as a damper at this, Parker's second Belfast visit. The soulless calculation of rock's perennial treadmill (new year, new album and a tour to promote the album) was evident, detracting from what's essentially a *soulful,* intense music.

The set was short and the encores were incorporated into what appeared to be a *pre-arranged* time-span for the show, not as an added extra. There was also the sickening Pavlovian ploy of giving the audience a signal to dance at a pre-determined juncture, indicative of the kindergarten atmosphere which restricts my enjoyment of 'name' bands at big venues.

Graham Parker hasn't changed much — the small guy with the high forehead sporting an Oxfam jacket, T-shirt, drainpipes and tinted specs — but his set, *has,* half of it coming from 'Squeezing Out Sparks'. He's still writing furious, desirous and angry love songs and sometimes they are very good indeed.

The stand out, perhaps the best song in the whole set, and certainly the most compelling, was 'Passion Is No Ordinary Word': Parker revelling in his exposition of rich, raw, and *passionate* emotion. The song came to a stunning climax with sublime vocals and delicate keyboards. 'Don't Tumble With The Local Girls' was standard Parker — lyrically ordinary, but successful because of its memorable chorus and musical vitality. A third new song 'Don't Get Excited' featured some furious knuckle-dusting guitar from the Schwarz/Belmont duo; but it's a weak number, repetitive and predictable.

Flanking the diminutive Parker, the tall guitarists comprise a refreshing front-line attack. Brinsley Schwarz looked smoothly dapper, his playing fluid; Martin Belmont chewed his cud like a cow on speed as he sliced thick rhythm chords. Bob Andrews, featured more on backing-vocals and keyboards, played a deceivingly crucial part in the songs' structures.

Strangely, the older songs often lacked their former gleam and splendour: 'Howling Wind' was cruder and brisker with none of the lavish panache of old; and 'Heat Treatment' was drained of its swirling, raging fervour, perhaps because they were playing without brass. 'You Can't Be Too Strong', using only bass, keyboards and acoustic guitar, dragged along ineffectually — another lowpoint in the set.

The bouncers led the advance to the front of the hall in the middle of 'Hey Lord, Don't Ask Me Questions'; and from there to the second encore 'New York Shuffle', we got a tour de force of solid rockers. It was a grand slam finish with favourites like 'Soul Shoes', 'Pouring It All Out' and the new multi-flavoured 'Protection' delivered as well, if not better, than ever.

But as I went home, the alienation brought about by the old problem of audience control and the new problem of inconsistency, made me feel it definitely wasn't Parker at his best.

Gavin Martin

The Enid

Glasgow

Blast yer eyes, Mike Oldfield!

Due to rock being more a culture than a type of music, the parameters are pretty wide but ther are limits. And it's about time something was done about all these music college graduates who think they can make a fortune with a rock band because the standards are apparently so low.

Today's target: The Enid.

The Enid don't even seem to like rock music. They play fairly conventional light-classical music for a small band setting — pastoral ELP; about as challenging as Mantovani.

They do it quite well; it's pleasant, tasteful, attractive. Certainly not invigorating, and, just because they use instruments normally associated with rock music and have a young audience, doesn't seem to me to merit any more space in a rock paper than other producers of mood music such as Lalo Schifrin or Ennio Morricone.

At one time The Enid laced their show with eccentric versions of well known rock songs like 'Pretty Vacant' and 'Honky Tonk Women'. It was a joke; light relief between the fugues and sonatas. Which is okay, the 'Wild Thing' they encore with now is amusingly ludicrous, like The Troggs with William Rushton replacing Reg Presley, the schoolmasterly Robert John Godfrey providing the evening's only vocals, except that the humour seems more contemptuous than affectionate; the difference between the Albertos and Benny Hill.

'Mayday Galliard' is the first piece. A sprightly tune, doubtless celebrating the rites of spring, and featuring guitarists Lickerish, Stewart and Pack prancing elfin fashion round imaginary toadstools.

"If Robert Stigwood ever remakes 'Love Is A Many Splendoured Thing' they'll do the soundtrack," remarks a friend.

The Enid's humour is apparently a significant factor in their popularity (they really are popular some places). And, indeed, wit is rife throughout. They're *nearly* as funny as Supertramp.

A drum solo while singing 'Born Free' sounds like a marvellous joke, but in practice is merely amateurish; of course introduced as "a very serious piece of music".

The jokes, their arrangements of (special Scottish treat) 'The Skye Boat Song' and 'The Dambusters March / Land of Hope and Glory', were only distinguishable from everything else by having familiar tunes.

Is all this Mike Oldfield's fault? Or is David Bedford the real culprit?

Glenn Gibson

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Unzipping the star attraction

The Ronettes

The Venue

Resurrecting stars from the past rarely works; The Ronettes are proof of that.

They dashed onstage clad in tight, black, satin, spray-on trousers and silver lurex frilled boob tubes, but the years have taken their toll and Ronnie Spector looked like a pregnant stick insect. I sighed dejectedly; I'd hoped for better.

Straight into an unconvincing 'Be My Baby', sung in flat, nasal tones, the girls didn't inspire one iota of nostalgia. All three desperately tried to recapture the golden dancing age of Tamla; twisting and squawking, making contrived provocative gestures at The Venue regulars — begging for kisses, lewdly suggestive. But the apathetic stage-crawlers couldn't oblige.

In true Ronette-styles they went through cover versions of 'It's A Heartache', 'Walking In The Rain' and 'Boogie Oogie Oogie'. Ronnie's twee vocal inflections backed by high-pitched chorus harmonies, were seductively reminiscent of better days and encouraged some of their drooling male admirers to clamber onstage and join their ageing idols.

There was the usual bunch of prats, but I cringed with embarrassment when one daring, over-excited young trendy even attempted unzipping the leading lady's flies — *much* to her delight.

The backing band were perfunctory, and the songs lacked the enthusiasm and interest of the originals. But past glory *often* ends in complacency.

The extremely short set predictably ended with a reprise of 'Be My Baby' then a prearranged presentation of flowers, curtsies and smiles all round.

End of round one, and already the liggers were piling in for round two . . .

Deanne Pearson

Pink Military Stand Alone The Nives Dogmen Of Albuquerque

Manchester

This was all for a good cause so let's be charitable.

I should ignore Dogmen being yet another Albertos spin-off, this one featuring Bob Harding and Tony Bowers plus others. Dogmen performed half an hour's worth of marvellously sustained drone which Muzak Inc. should commission immediately for dry storage in the event of mass subversion by office boys. They are threatening to change their name. Be warned.

I should laugh at compere C.P. Lee as faded Northern comic — the first on the block to slot in a Reggie Maudling joke, if not the last to similarly berate Sid Vicious.

I should forget The Nives' feeble attempts to pass themselves off as the latest hot sensation from France (the Miles Platting intonation is a dead give-away, lads). I should also erase the memory of the detrited collection of punk cliches they would presumably call a set.

But it's difficult to be kind about the way Pink Military were cut off halfway through what may have been a most provocative debut set.

They are the new vehicle for Jayne Casey of Big In Japan fame. Those who found the latter merely a joke title are in for a surprise. A sparse discipline has replaced controlled chaos. Again, Jayne dominates visually, but the current persona is sinister and doom-laden, meshing with the stark angularity of her band. Pink Military are surreal and abstract, their material (or what they were allowed to perform — 'Clone Sound', 'Radio Soundcheck', 'Solid Ground', 'Degenerated Man') building magnetically, then dissolving prematurely.

In the near future, Pink Military will have to suffer comparisons with the Banshees and Ludus, but they will not be ignored. The freeze-out prevents further elaboration on my part.

Oh well, the vast sum of £21 was raised for a local hospital.

Ian Wood

The Crooks

Pegasus

The price of a small Doner Kebab buys you into The Pegasus, current HQ of the Stoke Newington Shuffle, and where for the past three months you could Watusi on Wednesday and Frug on Friday to the sound of The Crooks.

A new-after-wave group, they played an assertive and enjoyable set. Decked out in Mohair jackets, candy-striped Ben Shermans, turn-upped jeans and two-tone shoes, their onstage demeanour fluctuated between molar-gritting awkwardness to reptilian cool.

For inspiration they draw heavily from the era of mass pubescent Lambretta pilgrimages and mugshots of Gene Pitney under many a school-girl's desk-lid. In a rough and tumble way, their tunes are an unsubtle nod to the more abrasive renderings of The Kinks, The Who and pre-devaluation Beatles.

The hard-driven riffs from Jim Fingers' guitar, Rizla-sharp bass and drums chores from Chris Broderick and Mickey Sparrow, and a vein-popping style of vocal delivery from Dino Dean, are the qualities that should ensure The Crooks will avoid the pratfalls of endorsing a parochial fashion which may never get off the ground. But with the impending release of the *Quadrophenia* flick, Mod-ernisation may soon be rekindled in the Universal Rock Mind, giving a terrif boost to the Tiger-Tail industry and all that jazz.

Hopefully, The Crooks would be acknowledged as the horse before the bandwagon (if it comes at all), because on a good night they play a rivetting set. They also happen to be a bloody great bunch of lads.

Rick Joseph

"There's no flies on me, folks." RONNIE SPECTOR — pic: PAUL SLATTERY.

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G-NU SINGLE THE GOLDEN YEARS BEG 16

Ready Steady THROW

King Rocker surveys the battlefield. Pic: CHRIS HORLER

Generation X

Lyceum

Blame it on The Fall.

Foolishly replying in kind when a solitary can hit Mark E. Smith on the right fetlock, they created a missile throwing scene lasting well into Generation X's set. I caught only two Fallsongs, but gather things were OK until then.

If so, some people are too tolerant by half. Po-faced and black-clad, The Fall excruciate with toytown organ, puerile drones and flat non-vocals over dismal drums: a musical equivalent of the Tate bricks.

Generation X follow this farcical functionalism with dry ice and a Wakemanesque fanfare; but even top ten artistes sometimes have to stand naked, and Billy Idol's peroxide chic acting was like a red rag to the averagely aggressive bull. He copped two full cans on the side of his head in the first number, but hung on in there, grinning inanely.

The band's rock 'n' roll war fantasies came grotesquely to life. Though the Lyceum's pint beakers are plastic, shorts come in chunky glasses that fit all too snugly into the palm of the hand. We were near the back, but one close-cropped sprat near us shattered one on Mark Laff's cymbals and dropped another just over Idol's head. I gave him Mike Brearley's phone number.

The music? Well, everyone's entitled to influences, but *this* was beyond a joke. Keith Moon stick-twirling, harmonies courtesy surfing-era Who, Beck/Ronson axe heroics, half-familiar riffs from a dozen major bands — and none of it topped with even the thinnest veneer of individuality.

A packed Lyceum was oddly unresponsive, suggesting many had been lured by 'King Rocker' alone. The relatively ambitious 'Prime Of Kenny Silvers' mock-epic *a la* 'Bewlay Brothers' was excellently performed but the applause hardly rippled.

It's no coincidence that 'Ready Steady Go' remains the best song. Like the Hot Rods, Generation X are a fantasy inhabiting a myth, their stance excluding real self-expression. The former's current predicament shows clearly the limitations of mere enthusiasm: unless you draw on experience, sooner or later you meet yourself coming the other way.

Yet I enjoyed myself, in the same way I enjoy a good '50's revival band — Generation 'X's affection for their sources is almost touching. With their blend of punk trappings and cosy music, they're *the* band for the punter fazed by '79 but keen to maintain credibility.

Generation X . . . the sweet you *can* eat between meals.

Harry George

Darts

Leeds

The specious thesis that Buddy Holly was unwittingly responsible for a host of talentless imitators who transformed classic rock and roll into bubblegum would hardly apply to Darts even if it were true.

But it *is* true that Holly and the other American rock and roll lynchpins of his time taught this nine-piece more or less everything they know.

Sweaty be-bop-ba-doo isn't everyone's idea of fun (most of my ageing relatives didn't like it the first time around), but for those here, it was like a dream come true. It was plain to see why: an interchangeable multi-racial line-up dressed in dowdy leisurewear, Darts took it in turns to take it in turns, displaying the kind of effortlessness Leighton Rees and Eric Bristow might playing 501 for peanuts.

Balding Bob Fish has more or less assumed the role as Dart orchestrator, and he does a masterly job. 'Raining In My Heart' and 'Don't Let It Fade Away', sung by Fish (and most of the punters), were rendered in the true spirit of the perfectionist that he obviously is.

But it's new black recruit Kenny Andrews and Rita who take most of the accolades. Andrews, looking like Smokin' Joe Frazier contesting a bout of anorexia nervosa, delivers some ballsy baritone, effectively complementing the vivacious vocals of the delectable Rita (where would he be without her?). It was a rapport set off just so when the black contingency climbed down onto the security platform to pat the outstretched hands of punters who swayed like tipplers and punched air like contented football hooligans.

On a purely instrumental level, Darts aren't easy to criticise. George Currie can get down and get with it on lead guitar. Similarly, Horatio Hornblower blew some mean sax, while new keyboardist Mike Deacon minced with the ivory, and the punters applauded at all the right times.

An acappella barbershop routine in the tradition of a Peter Gabriel out-take, stunned the audience into unconditional submission: The Darts' artistic accomplishment was more than they could handle, and they stood and watched, mouths agog.

But elsewhere, Darts are as uninventive as they are cliche: 'Don't Say Yes' is the kind of number Jeremy Spencer or John Mayall would have played as a last resort spoof jamalong at Chess, while 'Get It If You Can' is another singalong number of the ilk favoured by harassed publicans around closing time.

Naturally enough, everything went according to plan.

But the fervour which greeted the end of 'Daddy Cool' left me incredulous that after two meagre 'revolutionary' years, the MOR punters are back to square one.

Music for quasi-hep accountants under the illusion that their are avant-garde, Dartsmuzik takes us right back to '75. The cruelest irony of all is that the new wave opened up a lot of vistas for Darts and innumerable confused crossover kids are under the sad impression that their act is somehow revolutionary.

In the old days, I got *my* kicks with Free. Tell me, someone: whatever happened to the rock and roll heart?

Emma Ruth

Panties

Golden Lion

Any group named Panties must be a punky sub-Slits effort, right?

Wrong. Although the dubious (soon-to-be-dropped) name and logo give fair warning that Panties rely unashamedly upon the, er, 'talents' of female members Kim Lesley and Maz Roberts, they're a funky Latin/Salsa outfit.

The girls' smouldering vocals and fiery visual impact add the necessary oomph to an otherwise unspectacular band. Kim, in op-art yellow tights, is a bit shrill but ultra professional in a Carmen Miranda-meets-Kate Bush way. Maz, the lady in black, wraps her sensuous alto-chords around a melody, sounding unlike Kokomo's Dyan Birch.

Courtesy of drummer Hamish Stewart, the tunes seldom stray from the familiar chili bowl of Santana-inspired Gonzalez or Spiteri; but an artillery of percussion, Spanish lyrics for authenticity (a welcome relief from some corny English ones) and of course the girls, add enough spice to get the joint well steamed-up. There are moments of instrumental flash from Peter Flashett and impish Robin Bihi on guitars, and a very dependable backbeat from Sam Harley (bass) and Phil Hammond (ivories).

Panties are nothing new to anyone's aural wardrobe, but they reach the parts more experimental bands often neglect — your feet. While I can't speak for the frontline of riveted males (or their parts), my toes dictated we should be testing the floorboards to this lot, not pub-sitting.

Elissa Van Poznak

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■ From page 17

impressions of the current American climate.

"Living in England," he begins, "I could relate to many of the social implications that fuelled the New Wave, but in America things are very different because most of the people who go to rock concerts are pretty well off. For instance, most of them arrive in their own cars.

"Over there the record business is precisely that. It's a business and they only push acts they feel can please as many people as possible. The faster a band can achieve this, the more the record company gets behind them.

"In Britain social integrity appears to come first. Don't get me wrong, I'm not putting that down, but as I've already pointed out, a band like Bad Company. . .well, our forte has always been Paul's (Rodgers) singing and people come to see us because of that and because of certain numbers our fans insist on hearing. Otherwise they'd stay away and go and see someone like The Stranglers.

"British kids don't go to concerts on just the strength of a particular band's commercial success. They go because they want to see a particular band. In America it's entirely different. If you're successful they come because they feel it's the thing to do. If a band is hot, if they're happening, they *want* the hit album, they *want* tickets for the concerts because they don't want to feel out of whatever is supposed to be happening.

"They don't want their friends to tell them they missed an important show, whether it was important or not. As far as Americans are concerned success is more valid. They want to be associated with success even if it's only on a spectator level. And I don't particularly feel that it's a good thing.

"Here it's different. They'll say, OK, that particular band is big, but I don't like 'em and so they won't buy the album and they won't attend the concert. Which is a very good attitude.

"British bands show or attempt to show an integrity that is in keeping with the social climate, and in America that kind of credibility isn't essential. This gives British audiences more credence as being more perceptive than Americans.

"British audiences know exactly what they want to hear, whereas in America, you can go out and boogie if that's all you wanna do, or get into a fashion trip like Bowie. Over there, there seems to be an audience for almost every band whereas over here there isn't."

RALPHS IS aware that despite the fact that the American music industry is enjoying an unprecedented boom, with more people buying more records than ever before, rock 'n' roll doesn't carry nearly as much weight as it once did.

"Basically rock used to be a way of stepping outside of the establishment. . .getting away from your folks and having a bit of a loon. Today it's become so sophisticated that it's become an integral part of the establishment, which takes away the whole point of it all.

"Today it's sheer numbers. A couple of years ago to get a platinim album was something of an achievement. Nowadays it's triple and quadruple albums. Kiss have become General Motors — they put out a new model each year, while Fleetwood Mac and The Eagles have become so boringly huge that, OK, they might fulfill their particular function but nobody's quite sure what it is.

"So that's it. You're either an established band or you're new wave. I honestly feel that Bad Company slot somewhere in between the two, but once you become successful and sell lots of album you become part of the establishment. We might not have set out to do that — like I said we're just a blues band — but seeing as we are successful we're part of the establishment. Catch 22!"

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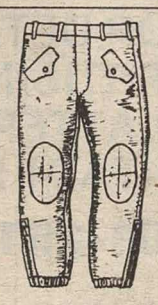

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NEIL SEDAKA. Members of Neil's fan club send birthday wishes to him for March 13th and look forward to welcoming him back to Britain in April for a nationwide tour. We would like to thank Neil for arranging a convention at which he will meet fan club members. Sedakaclub, 42 Barrington Drive, Washing, Tyne-Wear.

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JEANETTE BOOKER — Happy Birthday — where the hell are you!! Love Sue.

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THE PRISONER alive and well and living in harmony.

■ *From page 32.*

gone. And . . . you can put the front at the beginning, the back in the middle, turn it over, cut it up, splice it, edit it . . . you can do anything you want with it.

"After it leaves here I don't have any control over it."

Another tense argument developed, finally prompting the writer to retaliate: "But *I* don't know what's gonna happen to that film when I walk out of this room; whether I'm being used as the monkey to show a point for your purpose — and that bothers *me* on a personal level."

"Well then, maybe you can understand what I'm dealing with . . . which is fuckin' *great!* Somebody at least understands what this is all about.

"Because I don't want to be a monkey anymore. I don't want to be a monkey for people like *NME* and *MM,* whatever it is . . ."

"Is this going to be your last interview ever?" The writer suddenly asked. There was a long, strained pause.

"I wouldn't even dare to answer that question, because that's a front page job. I'd be an ape if I answered that one. I wouldn't be a monkey, I'd be a complete fuckin' gorilla.

"That's just a heavy one," he added cautiously. "I dunno. That's a few drinks' worth.

"You're saying to me, Well trust me . . . but you're not the guy who's calling the shots on the paper. Somebody else is. If they happen to be on the rag that day, I'm *fucked!*

"If their old lady screams at them in the morning before they go to work . . . right? . . . and they get in the office and say, Fuck Van Morrison, I'm gonna slag him. And what can I do about it? Nothing."

"I just know from *NME's* point of view," Stewart said, "that that sort of thing doesn't happen."

"It happens all the time, man.

"I mean, let's not be naive *pleeeease.*"

Predictably the interview led to more fierce confrontations: repetitive, turbulent and destructive. The camera crew were now only shooting snatches, Altham had left the room, and it seemed pointless for things to continue. Morrison regarded his relationship with the press as a "carnival freak show"; Stewart was indignant.

"Do you want to take it any further or what?" The artist asked.

The writer hypothesised aloud: what if Morrison wasn't being quoted in the press and was just dealing with somebody who was interested in his music, would he then relax and talk?

"As a matter of fact I did an interview like that last night," he replied simply. "It was *all* about music. There was nothing in it about anything else . . . the guy just asked me about *facts.*

"So . . . are you saying that if you asked me about that would it be cool, or what?"

Facts are often self-evident, Stewart stated, but there's a lot more to music than that — "And I'd like to know about Van Morrison's emotions."

"If you want me to sit here and talk about my emotions you've got to be out of your *miiind!*

"You might like me, an' you might like my music, an' you might really be into it. *YOU'RE* not a problem. The problem is gonna be the guy who wants to have a go at Van Morrison . . . and there's a few of them out there. An' I'm just *not available . . .*

"It's not worth it," he mused, shaking his head, "*sim-ply* not worth it."

IRONICALLY, it *didn't* end there. Both exhausted, they sat talking in the hotel lounge for another two hours. The writer recalled past 'difficult interviews'; the artist remembered past 'difficult journalists'. Stewart tried to convince him of his own sincerity. Morrison assured him there was no way either of them would come out of the film badly.

There was a fragile rapport between them, talking about literature, other musicians, rock culture. The writer briefly glimpsed the 'private person' who admitted that at 33 he no longer felt he was "rock 'n' roll", and doubted anybody was interested in what he had to say.

Further than that Stewart couldn't penetrate.

"But he doesn't like to reveal the personal side," Brenda said as she perched on the arm of Van's chair. "You'd have to live with him for five years to get to know him."

Eventually Morrison suggested they had another shot at the interview when they'd all slept, and the writer said he'd phone him at 1 pm.

"Hello, it's Tony Stewart," he said into the mouthpiece nine hours later. "Are you still up for the interview?"

"I think I'm gonna have to knock it on the head," Van replied. "I don't really have time for it . . . I'm getting no time for myself."

He asked the writer if he'd use the tape he had and Stewart said he would.

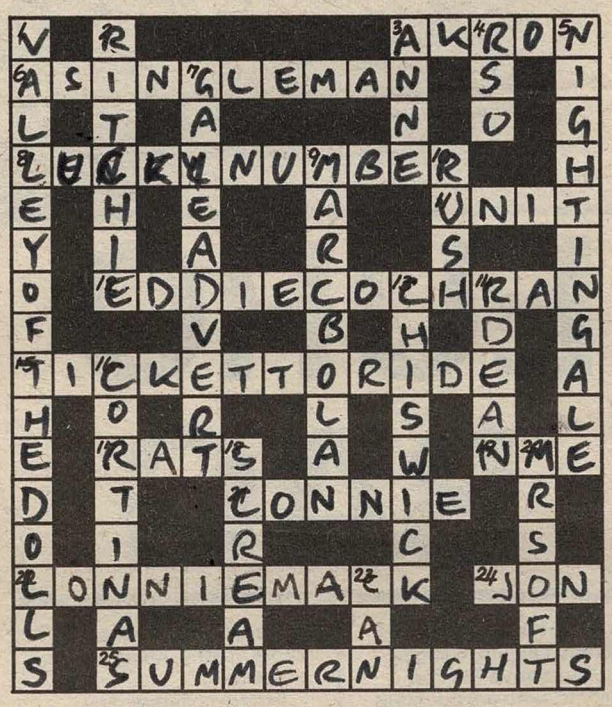
"Why?"

"Really, I'd prefer it if you didn't use it at all."

"I'll play it back and see what I think."

"I'm sure you'll do what you do."

Both of them probably realised the story would foster the Van Morrison myth and not the reality.



ACROSS

6 Home of those Booji Boys
8 Elton plumps for 45rpm, and a bachelor existence! (1,6,3)
9 . . . and the winning raffle ticket belongs to the lady in the pig-tails with the funny voice! (5,6)
11 "Concrete And Clay" outfit, minus four plus two
12 He originated the current Sex Pistols climber (5,7)
15 Beatles single (6,2,4)
17 Pop punk pests!
19 We're in the entertainment business!
21 Francis, '50s songthrush, of Plank, Kraut producer
22 American rockabilly guitarist whose U.S. hits included "Memphis" and "Wham" (6,4)
24 Hiseman or Anderson
25 Revolta and Luncheon-Vouchers 1978 chart-topper (6,6)

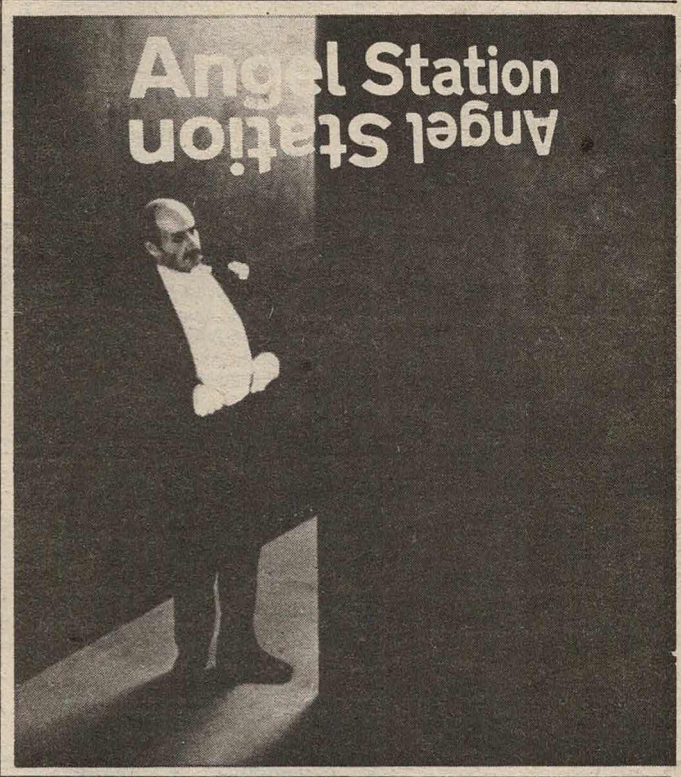
DOWN

1 By Gen X out of Russ Meyer and Ian Hunter (6,2,3,5)
2 Heavy metal axeman leader of multi-hued combo
3 and 5 The gang nail nine (anag.)
4 Gibbs' label
5 See 3 down
7 Punk you'd maybe find in the columns of Gay News! (4,6)
9 Went the way of 12 across, in the same year as Presley (4,5)
10 N.American HM combo
13 Obviously a London-based independent
14 Taylor, Motown singer who had hits with "Gotta See Jane" and "Indiana Wants Me" (1,4)
16 More than one popular family saloon takes on punky consequences!
18 Siouxsie lets out a yelp!
20 Cockney Rebel single, sounds like an ice cream (2,4)
23 Lord Lucan's Cologne connection

ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1 "Strange Town"; 6 Rio; 7 Undertones; 9 (Tommy) Steele; 10 Flamin' Groovies; 12 (Roger) Waters; 13 "Exodus"; 15 Taylor; 16 Police; 18 "Argus"; 20 Red Noise; 21 Mike (Pinder); 22 Monkees.

DOWN: 1 "Sound Of The Suburbs"; 2 "Radio Radio"; 3 "Get It On"; 4 Ten Years After; 5 Hot Gossip; 6 Rich Kids; 8 "She Loves You"; 11 "In Full Bloom"; 14 Brian Eno; 16 (Mike) Pinder; 17 Cars; 19 Skids.



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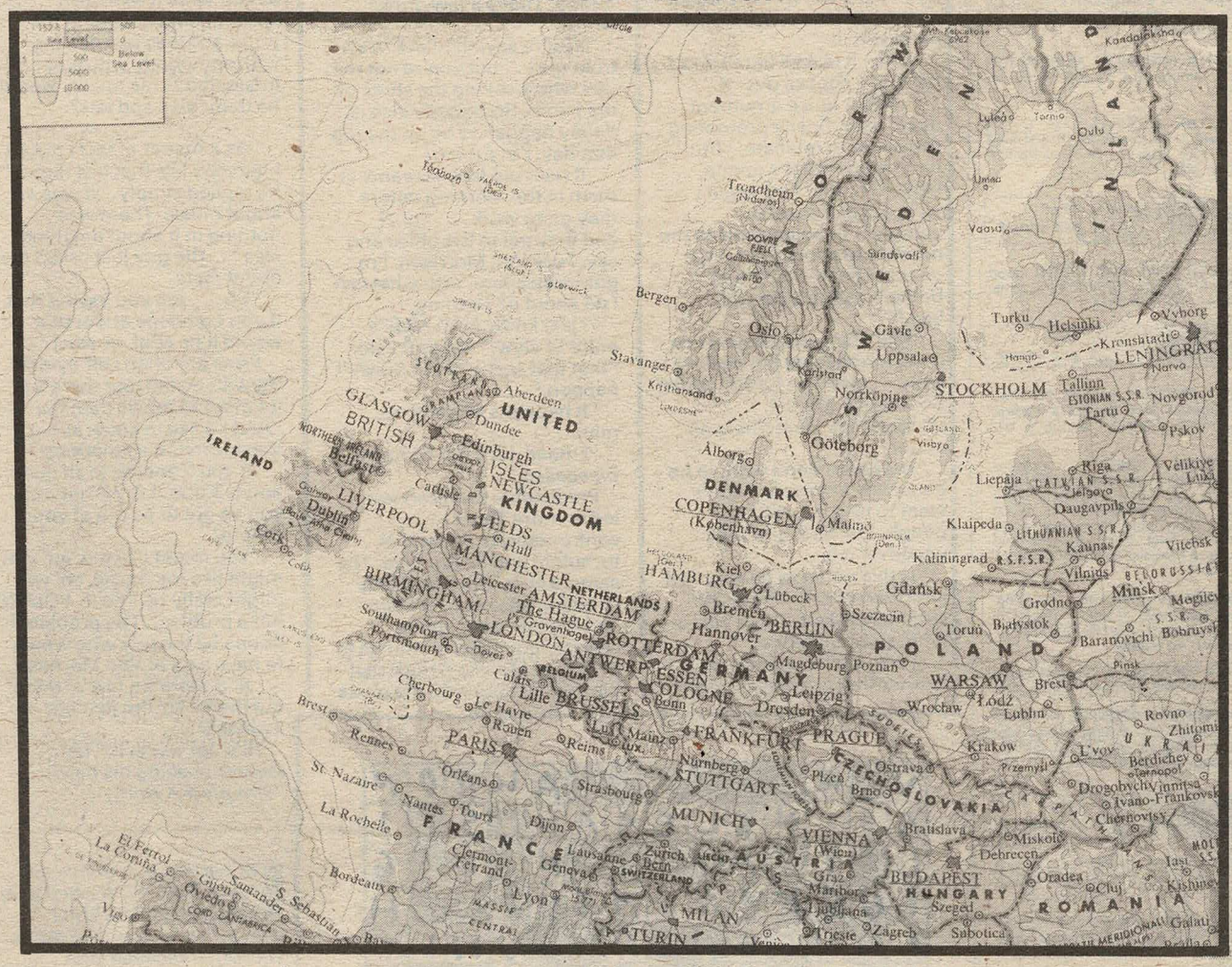
Every so often, we are accused of neglecting our wonderful readers in foreign lands. Nothing — we insist — would be further (in kilometres, natcho) from the truth. We take great pleasure, therefore, in rebutting these claims with



EURO BAG

embarassed band to finish up. Van had obviously packed it in and had pissed off down the pub, and boy can he afford it at £5 a ticket!

The lights went on at 9.45 p.m. and after refusing to move we were forcibly dragged from our seats by a gorilla (disguised as a bouncer). What a rip-off! How does he get away with it?

We were so annoyed that we decided to write to our three favourite publications — *My Guy, Exchange And Mart,* and *NME* — to voice our opinions.
THE BARBERSHOP QUARTET, Ulster.
An opinion shared by ... — CSM.

I am in a dilemma. I saw Van Morrison on his Tuesday night gig at the Hammersmith Odeon and came away thoroughly pissed off with him. But am I justified in feeling this? True, he only played a one-hour set and sang with less commitment than I do in the bath. But then he is an Artist with a capital A and subject to all that implies — temperament, paranoia etc. So should I just say, well, that's the price one has to pay for a man of his talent (which is vast) or do I turn round and say, 'Van Morrison, you're an arsehole'? Please help.
THE RUBASHOV MOUTHPIECE, Chingford, E4.
See page 30. — CSM.

So we had the great Rock 'N' Roll revolution of 1976 and, as with most revolutions, the result isn't altogether different and is certainly no better than what went before. Before, we were bemoaning the likes of Yes, Genesis and ELP for being too contrived and pretentious — altogether too clever. Musical inadequacies and general laziness on stage were covered up by spectacular special effects, and these only served to increase the sense of remoteness between performer and viewer.

Then, suddenly, everything was changed. For a brief time rock music became honest and immediate; intimate and exciting. But after that surge of life, the rock scene is once again being taken over by a crop of 'all too clever' bands — Human League, Gang Of Four, Alternative TV, Pop Group etc. who are equating weirdness and obscurity with intelligence and using these 'qualities' to cover up for a genuine lack of creativity. Sure — we've still got the Clash and Stiff Little Fingers, but these bands are no longer representative of the general trend. The remoteness is back in live performances and the slide projector has taken over from dry ice. 'Weirdness'! 'Obscurity'! — whatever happened to 'intimacy', 'immediacy' and EXCITEMENT?

I don't want to criticise these new bands too heavily, however, in fact I'll even go so far as to encourage them — you can't have a revolution if there is nothing to revolt against. So contrive away you boring new farts and roll on the next revolution!
IAN JAMES, Oxford.
You better watch it, Ian. If this goes on, the Moody Blues will have credibility again by 1981. — CSM.

For the Logical Bag!

Having read Jean-Jacques Burnel's "Systems" (27 Jan, page 17) I found myself thinkin' about th' same way. Same thoughts even here in my dear northern home country. It seems to me that there is the same problems everywhere the young are beaten down, got nothing, no reason, more violence, same apathy, no future, no nothing!

Where is democracy, humanity, freedom?

They say by voting every man can influence the way the decisions are made!

I say bullshit!

I say don't vote — all of you!

The only way to make those in power see we cannot afford a revolution 'cos too many people starve and die from diseases even nowadays.

Maybe it's time to tear this whole political system down in everywhere throughout the world to get more humanity, freedom and bread — yes bread! So to make things change, don't vote — ever!
THE UNBELIEVABLE E.T.O.P.H.P., Pudasjarvi, Finland.
Why are you telling me this? — CSM.

Paul Morley is a FOOKEN PSEUDY-ASSED SHITHEAD and a disgrace to Manchester. How come you print this drivel in your paper? Sack the bleeder quick. This is a hysterical comment and I hardly expect you to print it. But I feel better with it off my chest — there's no-one to tell it to here.
PAUL HEATON, Lyon, France.
Morley wants to know how you frogs know so much about bloody Manchester. — CSM.

British Consul: CHARLES SHAAR MURRAY, The Bag, NME, 5-7 Carnaby St., London W1V 1PG

Slag-off is the exciting new game for music journalists everywhere, in which the idea is to slag off (hence the title) your opponent's favourite bands.

Game for two players: One player (called the 'Kent') scores points for hitting the other player's (the 'Burchill') favourites. In this game the 'Kent' also scores for slagging bass guitarists from Sex Pistols until they die, and then turn round and say he loved them. The 'Burchill' also scores for rambling on about American girls, blonde girls, dead girls and exploited girls (and of course for hitting 'Kent's' forces where it hurts).

Game for four players: For this game a 'Parsons and a 'CSM' join in. The 'Parsons' forms an alliance with the 'Burchill', but concentrates on attacking 'CSM's' forces (called 'Ramones'), and licking Bruce Springsteen's ass. CSM's distinguishing tactic in the game is recognizing an inability to be a journalist, so he makes 'silly' attempts to be a 'rock star'.

Game for six players: Uses a 'Penman' and a 'Baker'. The latter praises (punk, disco) or slags (Heavy Metal) whole types of music, instead of taking each record as it comes, and the former tries to confuse the other players with terms like "floccinaucinihilipilification", "modal pentatonic progression" and "punk rock", so that the other players don't know whether he's slagging their forces or not.

All players score extra points by slagging off Chelsea (because even though they would deny it, they hate gays), talking in 'clever' Jamaican dialect, saying *Snouds* instead of *Sounds* (tee hee), *Monotony Maker* instead of *Melody Maker* (ho ho!) and *Grauniad* instead of *Guardian* (bloody hysterical!), also 'Four Eyes' instead of 'Elvis Costello', 'The Old Fat One' instead of 'John Peel', 'John Lydon' instead of 'Johnny Rotten' and 'Johnny Rotten' instead of 'John Lydon'.

The winner is me, if this isn't published, 'cos then I cancel my order and I can die happy. So, remember kiddies — Slag-Off!
DWAIN THE COMMIE BASTARD, Cardiff.
That's nothing — you wanna see us fighting over who gets the iron, the boot, the top hat and the ocean liner — CSM.

We are writing this letter in protest against the egoistic 'legendary superstar' Van Morrison.

After a 12-year absence from his native Belfast he finally condescended to do us the honour of two concerts in the luxurious surroundings of the Whitla Hall on 20th and 21st. After paying the exorbitant sum of £5 (God help the poor sod who paid up £35!) and queuing for almost six hours we expected a bit more response from 'Van the Man'.

There was no support band and he finally sauntered on stage about 8.45, stared at the audience with what can only be described as a look of contempt and began to mumber something.

After roughly five minutes he actually strolled off the stage, followed by his band, (you wouldn't have heard them behind a tram ticket anyway) looking as if that was it. He eventually decided to come back on and sang a few more songs, still completely ignoring the audience.

Throughout the performance, he left the stage three times plus band. He was finally persuaded to rasp 'Gloria', but walked off after two verses, leaving an

A WARNING: Carpets are this year's thing, maaan.
A.X. MINSTER, New Milton, Hants.
Don't you mean 'rugs'? — CSM.

Week,

Every rag your purchase whom of lot a people backward for letter backward a is this *NME* dear.
AN ABSOLUTE CRANK, Bangor.
You thank. — CSM.
Didn't he used to be something to do with the U.N.? — DAG HAMMERSKJOLD

No, honestly, it's OK, please go on to the next one. I didn't have a lot to say anyway. It'll wait. Next week OK?
KARL MARX, Croydon.
Sure, man. Whenever you've ready. — CSM.

What about all these rumours "Punk is dead" you may well ask! Well, I'll tell you the truth. Punk is nearly dead. Unfortunately, I should say. When Punk and New Wave first came out around 1976-77, there were lots of bands — well, there's lots of bands nowadays too — but the time '76—'77 had something that the bands don't have or have lost nowadays! The igniting spark!

And what about those bands who say they're Punk, but they're not?! As Bob Geldof once said — y'know, the rat stuck in a rat trap in successful group Bumtown Mice — "We're not a usual group. We are a Punk group and we play Punk music"!

What in hell do *they* know about Punk-rock anyway?

And something more 'bout the Rats. Why must Bob G. always talk in interviews? And no-one of the others? It seems to me that the others in the group never get a chance to say something, 'cos when Bob opens his big (and I mean big) mouth, no-one can stop him. Well, Bob always says "Don't believe the Bumtown Mice ever". And I'll tell you Bob, WE DON'T!
MARIE WILKEVICIOUS, Sweden.
Why are you telling me this? — CSM.

With reference to your letter in your issue of February 24th, from someone living in North Wales on the verge of suicide, I'd be pissed off if I had to live in Wales. Move, you cretin!
I. MacUNT, Braunton, N. Devon.
Ian? *Ian???* — CSM.

Dear Suicide Bag,

Thank you for printing my suicide note last week but I must tell you that you have been the victims of a hoax. I have tried for years to get a letter printed in *NME* and this was the latest idea I had to get one printed . . . and it worked . . . didn't it!
Originally from: SOMEONE IN NORTH WALES ON THE VERGE OF SUICIDE, now from
SOMEONE IN NORTH WALES WHO HAS GOT A LETTER PRINTED IN NME.
God, we're so gullible ... — CSM.

What the bloody hell do you think you are playing at printing such shit in February 24th edition of your paper that "Billy Doherty, drummer of the Undertones died on Monday". I think you must have some sick bastards working there!! It was bloody upsetting to read it and then believe it and then find put it was untrue. Even though Billy himself wasn't bothered by it, I'm sure many of the Undertones fans were.
JOANNE BARRY, Wokingham, Berks.
Not to mention us. We got hoaxed/stitched up /pissed about by people purporting to be representatives of The Undertones' management, and we fell for it. We apologise to The Undertones, their management and their fans — and if we get our mitts on the stitch-up artists concerned we'll have a frank exchange of views with them on the subject. Friends again? — CSM.

Can I be the first to say that the 3rd Clash album is long overdue?
FRED, Orpington, Kent.
What, no comment on the *Rock Follies* movie? — CSM.

OK, music press, Sham 69 quit. Who'll it be next? "A group forced into a corner by its own public image". (*Thrills,* February 10th). *You* make the images. *You* are totally responsible for Sham quitting. You bastards, you slagged them off at every gig and every album, then you've got the absolute cheek to write a 'sympathetic' write-up on their last gig. I couldn't believe it wasn't a piss-take at first. I couldn't believe even the NME would have the nerve to sympathize with Jim Pursey about the treatment he's got from the press, when 99 per cent of it's come from *this bloody rag!* It makes me puke to see how few irresponsible prats it takes to destroy a group. "Thousands will go without for the actions of a retarded handful. But ain't that always the way?". Ain't it just!
LIZ GISBOURNE, Carisbrooke, Newport.
Hold on! Sham coverage in this paper has by no means been the monolithic barrage of sneers that you appear to be talking about. Since the early Parsons/Burchill stuff, Danny Baker and Paul Morley (the authors of the current Sham copy) have both written long and hard in Sham's favour. Plus it wasn't *us* who sent the British Movement to their gigs . . . — CSM.

What if someone issued a music paper, and nobody bought it?
V & SM, no address given.
They did. It was called *National Rock Star.* — CSM.

T-ZERS

HANDS, KNEES & BUMPS-A-DAISY

A *T-zer* with literary pretensions is fond of quoting a famous piece of advice once handed down to greenhorn thriller-writers by the late **Raymond Chandler.** "When in doubt," opined Chandler, "have a man enter the room with a gun." Chandler must've authored the screenplay for last week's *NME* editorial meeting, since — just as we were launching into a fascinating if somewhat torpid discussion of the albums section, the door burst open and in came **Jimmy Pursey.**

Astute readers of this and other fine publications dedicated to the ongoing reportage and criticism of the art of popular music will undoubtedly have been in receipt of sundry animadversions to the effect that *(who let Nick Kent in here? — Ed)* J.P. has been more than somewhat under pressure of late. Looking spiffy but haggard in his black and white leathers after an allnight studio binge, **Sham 69**'s volatile leader *(good touch, that — Ed)* plonked himself down on the arm of **Neil Spencer**'s chair and soared into a heart-wrenching tirade on the debilitating effect of stardom on the emotional and spiritual health of a Yuman Being with especial reference to the buffeting that Yuman Being might receive from cynical and irresponsible media. The two members of *NME*'s merry little conclave who had done most to arouse the Pursey ire (for some reason he referred to them as "Mr **Burchill** and Mr **Parsons**") were elsewhere at the time.

Jimmy declared himself no less idealistic than he was when he started out, but considerably wiser; he fulminated at length on *l'affaire* **Angelic Upstarts,** and he premiered the tale of **Joe Public,** a rock star founded on the ideal of embodying his punters (are the initials significant or what?), an ideal which is carried through to its logical conclusion when the audience show up with guitars and the curtains part to reveal a gigantic mirror. He also wrecked the Ed's ashtray with one blow of his mighty fist in order to emphasise a point . . . After Jim split, we found it rather difficult to resume our dispassionate discussion of the albums section. The dots salute Jimmy Pursey!

We pause to ask the ritual question 'So what else is new?' What's new is in itself another question i.e.: whither **The Rich Kids** (or have The Rich Kids withered? Things have apparently been going poorly since Christmas, with **Midge Ure** facing off against **Matlock** and the rest until things got changed around and Matlock briefly considered and then abandoned the idea of a Rich Kids Mk II before joining up with **Iggy Pop** (see *Thrill*). Midge Ure has been song-writing with **Phil Lynott** (and one collaboration 'Do Anything You Wanna' appears on Lizzy's forthcoming 'Black Rose' album), while **Rusty Egan** has been doing some production work. Ure, Egan and **Steve New** are currently on good terms, so stay tuned for further developments . . .

Billy Idol's explanation of why people frow fings at **Gen X**: "Because we're the best looking group around and the best musicians. They're jealous of us." *Consumed* with jealousy, Bill. We were even more jealous when we heard a Radio 1 DJ referring to Bill's **"Cliff Richard** impersonation" on t'other week's *TOTP.* The only TV rock event more fascinating was **Pablo Cruise**'s utterly dynamic performance on *The Mouldy Fey Gristle Jest,* during which one of the dots was severely injured in the rush to turn the *T-zerz* central TV set off . . .

Public Service And Please Report To The Release Tent Department: **Members** bassist **Chris Payne** would like to get in touch with the young lady in tears and clearly suffering from the effects of physical aggravation at the Gen X *(who? — Ed)* Lyceum gig where she ran into **Nicky Tesco**'s girlfriend in the Ladies. The young lady concerned can ring us on 734-5473 and we'll put her in touch . . .

Incidentally, the next Members single is a 12-inch discomix (reggae style) of 'Offshore Banking Business', featuring what Ranking Tesco describes as 'the first white toast' (yeah, just toast) plus trombone veteran Rico. The flip is an extended version of 'Solitary Confinement' with somebody contemporary on saxophone mumbles our man brain-damaged in the dressing-room . . .

A warning to CBS: unless they get their skates on and release the live **Springsteen** album they'll be beaten to it by bootleggers. Included in the recent glut of Springbean bootlegs is a triple-boxed set . . .

This Year's Model, **Joe Jackson,** has taken off with such alacrity in the States that there are already Jackson-lookalikes on the streets. And on March 16 Joe is to judge a lookalike contest in Washington. Nearer home, at Sheffield's Limit Club in fact, Joe's guitarist **Gary Sanford** was ill on stage. He had barely had time to wipe the vomit from his mouth when a girl fan leapt up to plant a kiss on his lips . . .

Don't tell anybody that we told you but **Thin Lizzy's** current US tour is as support to **Nazareth** . . .

Back in the Modern World, Red Crayola's Mayo Thompson is producing Swiss girl band **Kleenex** in London for release on Rough Trade and a tour with **The Raincoats** in April . . .

Is **Burning Spear** getting set to sign with EMI? And have **Gang Of Four** already done so? . . .

Amidst talk of an **Elton John–Bernie Taupin** reunion — apparently the two recently spent a week in Paris discussing the idea — *T-Zers* learns that **Tom Robinson** (who else?) has written the lyrics to four Elton tunes. And while we're on the subject, let it be said that the blank space on the "TRB Two" inner sleeve was originally to contain a verse from Tom's song, 'Blue Murder'. The lyric is not over-complimentary to The Gateshead Police Force, and in their infinite wisdom EMI saw fit to censor it . . .

Freedom Of Expression Department: **Roxy's Andy Mackay** sounding off in *Muddle Maker* last week about **Tony Parsons** interviewing him and **Ferrari** in a super plush nosherie while wearing a vest. Says the horn man: "How dare he interview us in a vest? It's a wonder he wasn't mistaken for one of the cooks." That's funny Andy, TP thought you were one of the waiters . . .

Magnanimous, warm-hearted Concorde aficianado **Bianca Jagger** has come a cropper in her bid to strip hubbie **Michael** of half his assets. Or that's the way it looks. Michelin Mouth has quit the land of coke and money (California to you, bub), never to return, which means the LA courts have no power in deciding who gets what in the Jagger's divorce settlement. He maintains he has never lived in Los Angeles, and it seems likely that the case of Jagger versus Jagger will end up in London after all . . .

Readers bored with the saga of whether The Who will or won't tread the boards again, please skip this paragraph. Others, read on. In last week's London *Evening News* **Roger Daltrey** said he and **Townshend** had at last reached agreement over the immediate future of The 'Oo as a live band. Said The Curly Haired One: "The Who will be playing an open-air gig this summer in London." He also said The Who are also about to commence work on a new single and album — "I can promise people they'll be hearing a completely new Who sound." We'll believe it when we see/hear it. Meanwhile, Townshend has been spotted in the London offices of WEA Records. Was he scoring the new **Ralph McTell** album? Or was he discussing signing a contract with WEA for the licensing of his new label, Propeller Records? . . .

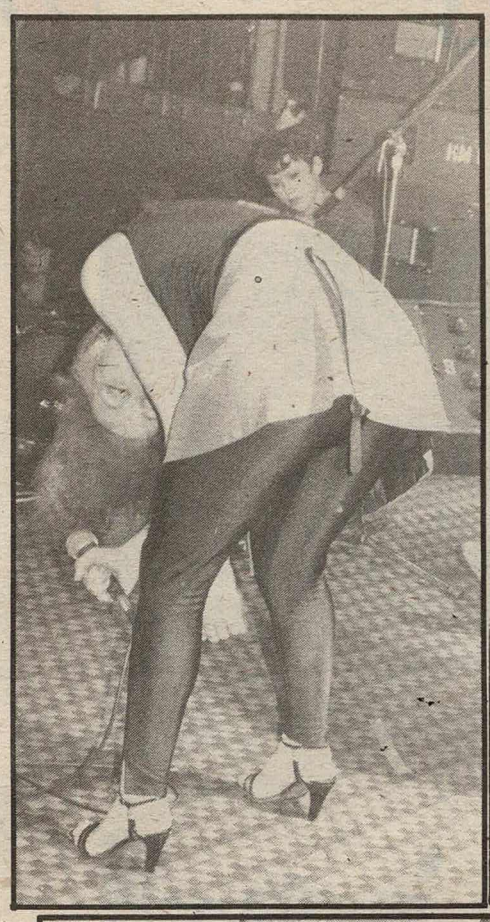
Aren't CBS more than a mite miffed about the non-appearance of **The Clash** on the cover of the new *Rolling Stone?* Not only did label-mate **Ted Nugent** pip them for the cover, but there isn't even a solitary word on the magazine's front to reveal that a Clash piece lurks within . . . .

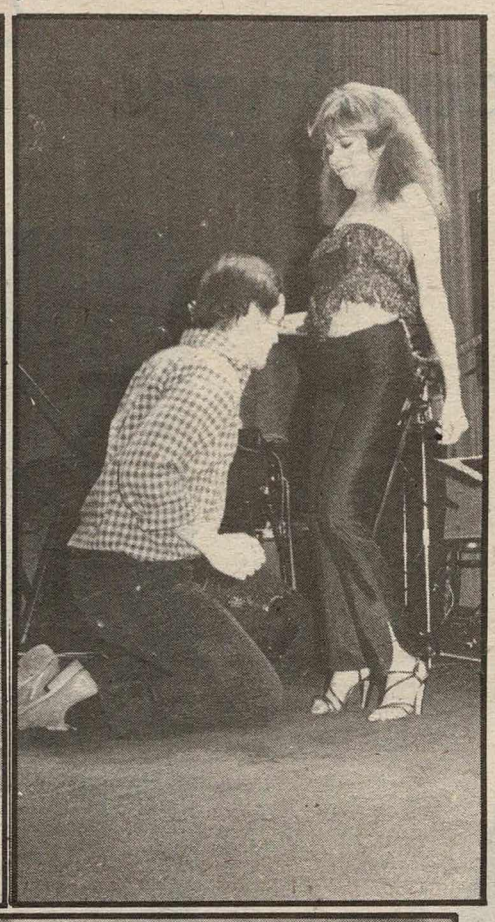
Mrs **Angie McCartney** (widow of the late **Jim McCartney,** who died in 1976) reveals that she and her famous, family-loving stepson have not spoken for a whole year. The cause, she told the *Sunday People,* was a "bitter, blazing row" over her decision to set up in the biz by opening a management agency — a decision which Pauly claimed would "embarrass" him. "Paul sounded terribly angry," recalls Mrs Macca Snr. "He said 'My father has only been dead five minutes and you're already flying your kite'. All I was trying to do was make my way in the world." Angie went ahead with her plans and is now a partner in the **Mike Mingard** Organisation. "I'd already more or less decided not to use the name McCartney in the business," she avers — adding: "Paul had no right to speak to me like that, as if I was some minion he could order around."

And more Happy Family: Macca's own stepdaughter **Heather,** a comely 15 year-old, makes no secret of the fact that her favourite pop star is not boring old Dad but our own young, shapely, Oxfam-suited **Blast Furnace** — already Very Very Big in Heather's home patch of East Sussex . . .

An irate **Mike Spenser** stormed into *NME* HQ last week to complain of certain references made about him in **Max Bell's Inmates** feature in last week's fab ish. Both Max and the Inmates guitarist felt the remarks were said in fun — and were not in any way intended to be malicious. And both parties would like to take the opportunity of apologizing if any offences was caused. A gushing *T-Zers* would like to mention that Spenser and **The Cannibals** have a single out at present — 'Nadine' — which you might care to investigate . . .

Tony Stewart take heart. Even **Van Morrison's** mates are given a hard-time by the belicose Belfaster. Anxious to run an interview with him an American West Coast paper agreed to his request to ship in an Irish journalist — an old friend of Morrison's — to conduct the interview. On renewing their friendship, the Irish scribe was asked if he minded adjourning to a nearby bar to talk over old times, after which they'd get down to business. After a strenuous walk to and from the bar the writer and Morrison (refreshed by an orange juice — he doesn't drink now-a-days), returned to Van's pad where our man truculently informed his 'mate' that he didn't want to do the interview after all — and instead went to bed. The journalist returned to the Emerald Isle empty handed . . .





Right: Bette Bright goes bump in the night. Left: Ronnie Spector brings an audience to its knees at The Venue. Below: Lora Logic cleans up the act and the dressing rooms. All pix by Ray Stevenson.

BETTER BADGES

TOP TEN

This week		Last week
1.	Clash Police	(1)
2.	PiL	(2)
3.	Stiff Little Fingers	(—)
4.	999	(7)
5.	Buzzcocks	(3)
6.	Gang of Four	(5)
7.	RAF	(—)
8.	Yellow Costello	(—)
9.	My Way	(—)
10.	The Members	(—)

New releases 20p: Be Stiff, The Future is Female (Wayne County), Sex Pistols: Rock'n'Roll Swindle, Never Trust a Hippy, Cash From Chaos, Believe in the Ruins, The Only Notes That Matter, They Swindled Their Way to the Top. True Love (Jilted John), UK Subs CID.

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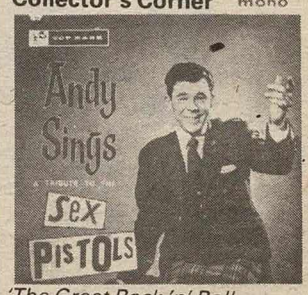

'The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle Part Two?' asks reader Hugh Jarse of Glasgow.

Published by IPC Magazines Limited, Kings Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London, SE1 9LS, at the recommended maximum price shown on the cover. Editorial and Advertisement Offices: Kings Reach, Stamford St., S.E.1. Printed in England by Northamptonshire Newspapers Limited, Kettering, Northants. T.U. Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper. Sole Agents. Australia and New Zealand, Gordon & Gotch (Asia) Ltd., South Africa, Central News Ltd., East Africa, Stationery and Office Supplies Ltd. Publishers.

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